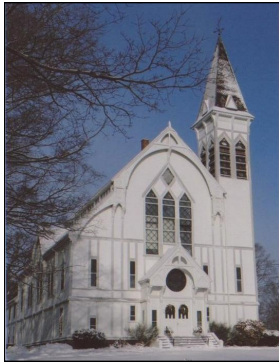


From the Hill



First Congregational Church of Georgetown

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April 2022

Dear Church,

As we move into April and the weather warms, I *want* to be able to *just* reflect and marvel on the life poking out of the earth, the crocuses and the brave daffodils blooming in some yards already, and the rabbits (once again this year) munching all the new green popping up in my yard. I want to leave us in that life-giving peace of mind; with visions of bounty and new life and anticipation. Oh, how I want that.

But, my heart isn't in it so much right now as I watch, read, listen to reports of war destroying lives in Ukraine. As a despotic leader wreaks havoc on this neighboring country, and pushes mis-information, lies and propaganda to control his subjects of Russia.

"War is not healthy for children and other living things." I have a framed art of this on my wall at home, as if we needed any reminding.

My heart aches for the people of Ukraine, all who are in harms way. And so, I spend more time wondering about what to pray and how to pray. Frankly though, praying feels a bit helpless as bombs and bullets fly destroying lives in cities and countryside. And yet, I know that prayer is central to staying focused on how our Creator God formed us as one people, to think of one another as siblings, to care for one another as if our own lives depended on it.

And if I pray for Ukraine, then the people of Russia must also be focus of my prayer and aching heart. The same goes for all who are welcoming their new refugees arriving at their borders, which means then, all the neighboring countries of Ukraine are included in my prayers with sighs too deep for words.

Oh, and if I follow Jesus's invitation, I am to pray for the enemies as well. That's not so simple, as my judgement and anger bubbles up, clouding my attempt at this prayer.

Right now, the words from Isaiah are helpful to me, to find hopeful words, even if they feel a bit dreamy. Isaiah 2:4 reminds us that:

"God shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

This is not so much a vision from Isaiah, and a command that he recites from the words of God. So, join with me in prayer. Go ahead, pray away, pray hard and often, lean on Isaiah's words of God's commands that nation will no longer rise up against nation, and that we no longer study war. May it be so in our lifetime.

In the meantime, we need signs of life, in the bunnies and daffodils perhaps these days more than ever. "Hope springs eternal," so the saying goes. May the daffodils give you hope of God's omnipresence and love even in these present days of war,

Pastor Holly

Diaconate News

April 2022 Greetings from your Diaconate:

Our church family (near and far) is of the utmost importance to us. We are so happy to be back in our beautiful sanctuary to experience the meaningful and beautiful Easter month together!

Happy Easter! So many wonderful happenings during our Easter season with all the glory it portrays. We will gather together for Palm Sunday April 10th, Maundy Thursday April 14th and on April 17th Easter sunrise service followed by our traditional breakfast and then our Easter Service with all the hope and love it means to each of us. The visuals of bunnies, cherished lambs and the bright happy faces of the spring flower, the daffodil brings joy and peaceful feelings to each one of us.

Reflection and celebration...those two words symbolize Easter. We reflect on our church family. We share so much happiness together. Of course we would not be a family if we didn't share the good and the not-so-good....laughing together until our sides hurt, the warmth of hugs (and elbow bumping) when we shed our tears and share our anxiety and fears. This reminds us, during these uneasy and somewhat difficult times, that here at the First Congregational Church there is always a friend who walks with you and beside you.

Please keep your deacons in your prayers who work so hard to be there for each of you. Thank you to this incredible team...Antoinette, Emily, Pam, and our newest member Sharon. Their gentle and caring ways are evident to each of us in our church family. It is my honor to be back on the Diaconate.

Those who remember, I always close with this meaningful quote. "God's love is so large it covers the world, but so small it can curl up in the corner of your heart."

Happiest of this Blessed Easter Season,

Gladie Kneeland, Chair

Women's Guild

BRING YOUR OWN SANDWICH LUNCH

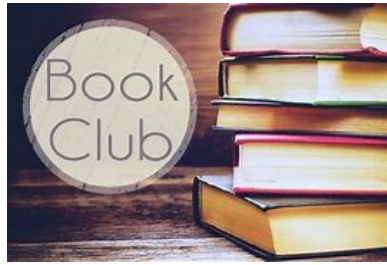
Tuesday, April 19, at NOON

Storytelling with Gladie

Our own Gladie Kneeland loves an audience, and we, in turn, love to hear Gladie's stories! Start guessing about what her subject might be! Whatever it is will be a highly anticipated treat.

Hostesses: Nancy Aberman & Carol Lutes

Devotions: Shirley Powell



Each month we have a group of people who meet to talk about books selected by members. Meetings are currently held via ZOOM.

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.

April 27 7:00 p.m.	<i>The Rose Code</i> ©2021 656pp	Kate Quinn	Zoom
May 25 7:00 p.m.	<i>Mrs. Jack: A Biography of Isabella Stewart Gardner</i> ©1965 365pp	Louise Hall Tharp	Zoom
June 29 6:00 p.m. dinner 7:00 discussion	<i>Perestroika in Paris</i> ©2020 268pp	Jane Smiley	Nancy Aberman 199 W. Main St Nancy: 978-352-2793 and Zoom

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 Susan Stead.

April Birthdays



Emily Aberman

JoEllen Fielding

Lee Ames

Henry Gervais

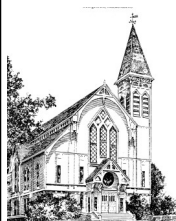
Michelle Brock

Elizabeth (Kalfin)
Jones

Zachary Brock

Deb Lamoureaux

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 Bob Knapp at 978-518-7859.

*This April, our steeple will be lit in loving memory of our dear friends,
June Sheehan and Rose McGrath.*

~ Janice & Arthur Murphy



Calling All Church Women!

Planning has begun for our Women's Retreat which is scheduled for May 6-8 in New Hampshire at Toni Cassidy's Tamworth home. There will be a full weekend of activities, fellowship, food and opportunities for spiritual growth. Adult women of all ages are invited to attend this special event, sponsored by the Christian Development Team.

Please sign up, by **April 10**, if you are planning to attend. (Let us know if you have any dietary restrictions.) To sign up, email Toni Cassidy at toni_c1@comcast.net We will follow up with an itinerary, FAQ list, and volunteer team opportunities (food, set up, clean up, etc.).

In the meantime, for inspiration, check out the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall for some photos of past retreats. If you have any questions, contact Nancy Aberman (naberman1@gmail.com or 978-457-5924).



Palm Sunday—April 10, 10:30 AM
Morning Service—Procession of the Palms

Maundy Thursday—April 14, @ 6:00 PM
Candlelight Service with Music

Easter Sunday—April 17
6:30 AM Sunrise Service @ Camp Leslie
Please bring a chair or blanket
(W. Main St. RT. 97)
7:00 AM Breakfast in Fellowship Hall
10:30 AM Easter Service

Spring Cleanup (and Free Breakfast)



Friends,

Saturday, April 9th, 9:00 AM is the date set for our annual **Church Spring Clean-Up**. This is the time when we clean up around the Church to make a clean space for our journey to Easter. This year we have a special treat! The Men's Group has offered to serve breakfast to anyone who would like to attend. If after breakfast, you would like to pick up a dust cloth or paintbrush we will have plenty of things to work off the yummy breakfast.

If you can't make it to Clean Up Day, below is a list of things that need to be done. Feel free to pick one and work on it by yourself (or with a friend) at any time during the week of April 3rd. If you can let the church office know what you have done, we will check it off the list. Thank you for your help. Trustees Team: Chuck Davis, Michelle Brock, Joanne Kelly

Balcony:

Dusting everything, including the pews and pew cushions, the hymnals, the handrails, the balcony "sill"
Vacuum floors and stairs

Sanctuary:

Dusting the pews and cushions.
Floors under the pews could use a wet mopping to get the dried mud that won't vacuum up

Narthex:

Rails dusted, and in between the rail posts (always spiderwebs)
Vacuum stairs

Fellowship Hall and Long Room:

Wet mopping to pick up the dried mud from the winter (This may be challenging as the painting will be occurring at the same time and mopping in the sanctuary will occur simultaneously.)

Yard Work pruning shrubs and such (contact Jaime Krenn for more information)

Looking Back

50 years ago:

Organ concert with Douglas Rafter

Couple's Club produces a play

Paper Drive.

Our youth rode around town in the back of pick-up trucks and collected paper from residences. (Oh my!)

Jr. Choir festival in Topsfield

Haverhill Mental Health rents the 2nd floor of Metcalf House (The house behind the church on Clark Street, now owned by the Durkee family)

40 years ago:

Family fun night

Jr. Choir festival in Wenham

Pictures taken for the new pictorial directory

30 years ago:

Our church offices move to their new space in the addition. (Where they are today)

Girl Scout Sunday

20 years ago:

Union Ash Wednesday service with Groveland Congregational

Among those joining the church on Palm Sunday were Laura Zalewski & Brad Chute

Pasta Supper put on by the Youth group (\$5.00)

Music appreciation Sunday honoring Evelyn Boose and Bob & Emily Knapp




10 years ago:

Workless suppers organized by the Diaconate. Parishioners meet at a restaurant to dine and share fellowship. Each pays for their own meal and then contributes \$10 to the church.

Among those joining the church is Sylvia West (Johnston)



April 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>3 9:30 Band 10:30 AM Worship Fifth Sunday of Lent</p>	<p>4 6:30 Bells 7:30 Band</p>	<p>5 10 AM Bible Study 4:45-6:15 Girl Scouts</p>	<p>6 7PM Boy Scouts</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>1 Spaghetti Dinner for Ukraine 6-8 PM </p> <p>2</p>	
<p>10 Palm Sunday 10:30 AM Worship Sixth Sunday of Lent Book Study <i>Waking Up White</i></p>	<p>11 5 PM Property </p>	<p>12 10 AM Bible Study 6 PM Finance 6:30 Bells 7:30 Band</p>	<p>13 Missions meeting 6 PM Diaconate 7PM Boy Scouts</p>	<p>14 Maundy Thursday 6:00pm Bells/7pm Service of Tenebrae</p>	<p>15 Good Friday</p> <p>16</p>	<p>9 Men's Group Breakfast & Church Clean-up Day</p>
Holy Week						
<p>17 Easter 6:30 AM Sunrise Service Church breakfast 10:30 AM Worship</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19 10 AM Bible Study 12 PM Women's Guild 4:45-6:15 Girl Scouts 6:30 Bells 7:30 Band</p>	<p>20 6:30 PM Council 7PM Boy Scouts</p>	<p>21 Knitting 10 AM/7 PM</p>	<p>22 </p> <p>23</p>	
<p>24 10:30 AM Worship</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26 10 AM Bible Study 4:45-6:15 Girl Scouts 6:30 Bells 7:30 Band</p>	<p>27 7 PM Book Group Via ZOOM 7PM Boy Scouts</p>	<p>28 6 PM CD Meeting</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>

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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.

Open and Affirming Covenant Statement:

Guided by the love of God, First Congregational Church Georgetown Massachusetts seeks to be a welcoming community of healing, hope, and hospitality. We celebrate the diversity that God created and seek to reflect that diversity in our community of faith.

Our faith leads us to follow God's example and welcome all persons, including those of all ages, races, ethnicities, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, faith background, family structure, marital status, physical and mental abilities, and economic circumstances into the full life and ministry of the congregation.

All individuals are welcome to join in our common life and mission as leaders and participants, fully sharing the worship, rights, and sacraments of this church.