
NEWS FROM THE HILL

MARCH 2016

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF EASTON



Minister

Rev. Amanda Ostrove

Church Council Chair

Phillip A. Doremus

Board of Deacons Chair

Nathalie Taranto

Church Secretary

Jeanne Sedelnik

Sexton

Sara Scoran

Phone

203-261-2517

E-mail

echurch@snet.net

Website

Eastonchurch.org

Office Hours

Monday-Friday

9 am to 1 pm

MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR



EASTER POSSIBILITIES

The message of Easter is not only that Christ is risen, not only that suffering is not the last word, not only that God gives new life, but this: Nothing is impossible with God.

The Rev. James Martin, S.J.

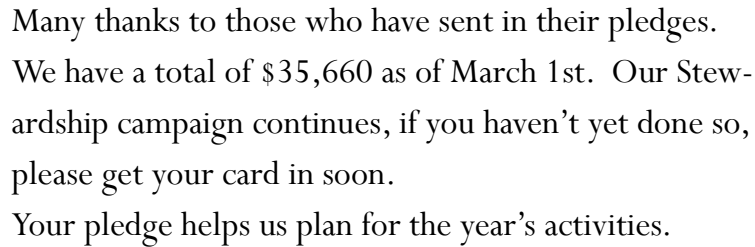
"But the angel said to them, 'Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here'. Mark 16: 6

It's hard to imagine but we are already coming up on the beginning of Spring. It is no coincidence that Easter falls in the Spring when the world is teeming with new life. I wait very expectantly each winter for those first signs of life in the world. As I was walking into the Old Academy Building the other day, I noticed the daffodils starting to pop from the ground and I felt a sense of joy. Daffodils are one of the earlier flowers to appear in the Spring and I have always been reminded of Easter morn when they come. We are reminded with the Spring time blooming that there is new life, that we are promised a new and better life when this one comes to an end. Christ died on the cross amidst some of the most agonizing pain imaginable physically, emotionally, and spiritually. His life had come to an end. His followers saw his body and knew from their own eyes that Jesus had died. And in their experiences, they figured that once one died they stayed that way.

But like those bulbs, or trees that become bare and dead looking in the winter, he came back to life in the most extraordinary way. He physically was given new life so that we might look on and believe that there is new life offered to us all. That our experiences in this mortal world, will not be all that there is. There is hope that something better awaits us all. And we are given glimpses of this new life in the way that our flowers come back to life and our trees throw out buds. So take some time to walk outside smell the fresh morning air of Spring and take in the renewal of life all around and know that God has given each of us a gift. Please think about joining us as we accompany Christ in his final moments in our Maundy Thursday Tenebrae service on March 24th at 7:30 PM and again on Easter morn to celebrate the renewal and new life of Christ offered to all on March 27th at 10:00 AM.

Blessings,
Rev. Amanda

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The International Day of Happiness is observed on March 20 (also the first day of spring this year; coincidence?). Jesus said we'll be happy (or "blessed") when we're meek, merciful, pure and so on (see his Beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-12). In other words, happiness results from putting others' needs above our own.

EASTER BASKETS FOR COVENANT TO CARE

Your “basket” should consist of non-perishable foods (boxed/canned goods) with a gift card for fresh ingredients for an Easter Dinner. You may do both yourself or join in with a friend. We still have some families that need sponsors.

Easter Baskets for Covenant to Care

LENTEN SCHEDULE



The ewer (a vase-shaped pitcher) and basin, which symbolize cleansing, are related to two biblical events from Holy Week: when Jesus washed his disciples' feet (John 13:1-17), and when Pilate "washed his hands of" Jesus' blood before the crucifixion (Matthew 27:24).

Because of the foot-washing, the ewer and basin have become a symbol of service ministry.

SIMPLE SUPPERS

Join us for our Simple Suppers on Wednesday nights starting on February 10th during our Ash Wednesday service. Our Lenten Theme this year is *A Walk into the Wilderness*. We will be walking through Jesus' life as we journey through Lent with a video series based on Jesus' life and teachings. We ask that you join us in this journey together enjoying the discussion and fellowship. All people are eagerly invited to join us in this time of unity and devotion. Simple Suppers begin at 6:00 p.m.

Simple Supper Schedule:

March 9th

March 16th



MAUNDY THURSDAY

TENEBRAE SERVICE

Join us for Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service March 24th at 7:30 PM at 336 Westport Rd Easton CT, at the corner of Westport and Center. All are welcome for this moving Tenebrae service preparing your hearts for Easter. At this time we join together in observing Christ's last moments before the cross and we try to keep awake with him for just one hour as he asked of his disciples in Gethsemane. See www.eastonchurch.org for more details.

We have a few Lenten devotionals left, you can pick up your devotional in the Old Academy Building or in the church sanctuary.

Palm Sunday, March 20

10:00 a.m. Worship

Maundy Thursday, March 24

7:30 p.m. Tenebrae Service

Easter Sunday, March 27

10:00 a.m. Worship

EASTER FLOWERS

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Lilies are the traditional decoration for Easter and Tulips are a sign of new life and new beginnings. We invite you to help us decorate our sanctuary with these traditional flowers. We will again have “virtual flowers” as well as real plants. You may purchase a Lily, Tulip or a “virtual flower” in honor or memory of a loved one. The list of donor and dedications will be included in the Order of Worship on Easter Sunday. The plants will decorate the sanctuary on Easter and you are invited to take them home with you after worship, if you wish. Plants and “virtual” flowers are \$16.00.

Your Name:

(exactly as you want it to appear in the Order of Worship)

In Memory of

In Honor of

“Virtual” flower ____ @ \$16.00 each Virtual Total \$ _____

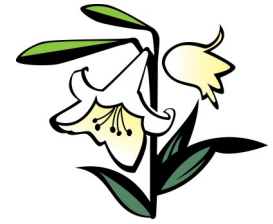
Lily Plant ____ @ \$16.00 each Lily Total \$ _____

Tulip Plant ____ @ \$16.00 each Tulip Total \$ _____

Please make check payable to: **The Congregational Church of Easton** and memo: **“Flowers” or “Virtual flowers”**.

Order forms with checks can be mailed or left in the church office or put in the offering plate. Orders for Lily or Tulip **plants** are due March 20th.

____ Please bring my flowers to someone in need.



The lily that blooms around Easter is a symbol of Christ’s resurrection because it rises from a seemingly lifeless bulb decaying in the ground. It is also used as a symbol of Christ himself. The lily, a symbol of purity, is often used to represent the Virgin Mary.



BOARDS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS



TAC MEETING

March 20th

11:30 a.m. Bishop Room

DEACONS MEETING

March 13th

11:30 a.m. Bishop Room

DEACONS

The Annual Reports publication for the church annual meeting (3-28-2016) carried general information from Boards and Committees re: their business as we go forward in our Turnaround Church process. Further updates noted by the Board of Deacons, during the meeting, were of ways to attempt to appraise/measure movement toward our turnaround aims:

Consistent increased worship attendance

Increased sign-ups as Coffee Hours hosts/hostesses

Increased sign-ups providing flowers for Sunday worship services

Increased exposure, communication and responses of community organizations

Our benefactor continues to follow us

Rev. Amanda has re-initiated the networking practice of all Easton Clergy

Rev. Amanda has joined a UCC networking group

While it is not possible to calculate an actual cost-benefit analysis in terms of dollars on the above, Deacons feel that much of our increased participation and activity is due to direct personal contact and follow-up on Rev. Amanda's part.

Also, we thank the Turnaround Action Committee members for their persistent and on-going dedication to bring about our church's objective.

Annual reports may be picked at the church office and/or read at the church website – eastonchurch.org. Good reading.

ST. LUKE/ST. PAUL'S FOOD KITCHEN

The Board of Christian Outreach prepares a meal the third Tuesday of every month for St. Luke/St. Paul's Church in Bridgeport. This ongoing mission project is totally dependent on the generosity of members and friends from our church and those from Jesse Lee.

Our monthly menu is chicken legs and thighs, side dishes of potatoes, rice or pasta, prepared any style you choose. Vegetables, salads, fruit and desserts round out the menu. These items are usually donated by members and friends and we try to coordinate with Jesse Lee so your early sign-up is appreciated. Some standard items and condiments are purchased and monetary donations towards their cost are very welcome. We also need help with transportation and serving the dinner at St. Luke/St. Paul's.

If you would like to donate or assist in any way, please see the Menu in the Church Hall for sign-ups for food and serving. You can also contact the church office (phone: 203-261-2527 or email: echurch@snet.net) or Barbara van Achterberg (phone 203-261-2156 or email: barbara-vanachterberg@gmail.com). This mission is only possible for the church with many hands making light work! Thank you.

ST. LUKE/ST. PAUL'S FOOD PANTRY

Non-perishable food for the St. Luke/St. Paul Food Pantry is collected on the First Sunday of the month, when we share Communion and remember those in need of experiencing God's abundance. These are delivered on the day of the food kitchen and can be dropped off at the Old Academy building any time during the month. We also deliver gently used clothes and books/toys at this time.



MARCH 15TH FOOD KITCHEN

Our menu is chicken—any style!
Side dishes of starch and
vegetables,
with salad, fruit and desserts

We try to coordinate with Jesse Lee
members on the menu items,
so please sign up as soon as possible!

FEBRUARY FOOD KITCHEN THANKS

Many thanks to our cooks,
bakers and shoppers! The Glasers,
Vera Knapp, Suzanne Herlihy, Jane
Kondratovich, Connie Wing, Pat Da-
vis, Sara Scoran, Barbara van Achter-
berg, Cynthia Landry, Rev. Amanda,
Susan March, Lorry McLaughlin,
Caren Laskay, Phil Doremus, Marj
Klar and Claudia Nielsen.

On a blustery and rainy February 16
we served approximately 100 meals.
Prepping, transporting and serving
were: Sara Scoran, Barbara van
Achterberg, Rev. Amanda, Mark
Rozelle, and Pat Davis.



We continue to collect
sample or travel sized
toiletries. These
small items make a big dif-
ference to those in need.

If you can help, please drop
them off anytime and place
in the basket at the entrance
to the church hall.

Thank you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TURN AROUND CHURCH COMMITTEE

Turn Around Committee have been busy planning and implementing activities. We had our first game day on Saturday February 13th and although we did not reach goals with inviting the community to join us, we had a good time of fellowship and learned some valuable lessons that will help us to make improvements the next time we run a game day. We are working hard to put together our first fundraiser, which will be a flea market type tag sale from the trunks of people's cars. We hope that you will support us in this event. We will announce the date as we get a little closer to having the details figured out. We have also been working on tag lines and have put together our first survey handed out at the annual meeting. We thank everyone who shared their input. We have also emailed out the survey to those who were not able to attend the annual meeting. We will be announcing our tallies once we finish getting responses in. We thank everyone who has been supporting us in our activities.



"It is spring again. The earth is like a child that knows poems by heart."

Rainer Maria Rilke

The Song of the Psalms

*He is coming! He is coming!
We hear triumphal shoutings from the eager marching throng;
We catch the thrilling music of the children's lifted song;
The very stones are throbbing to break into acclaim,
And all the hills exultant to reecho back His name.
Break all our fronded branches and strew them in His way,
Our strength and all our beauty belong to Him to-day!*

John T. McFarland



DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS

At 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, March 13th—

Don't forget to change your clocks on Saturday night March 12th before you go to bed!

You don't want to be late for church on Sunday.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

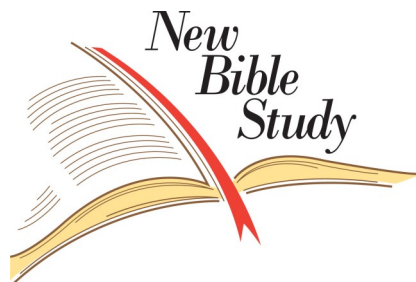
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ALTAR FLOWERS

A donation of Altar Flowers for a Sunday worship would be a wonderful addition to our services. You may provide the flowers yourself, have a florist deliver them, or have the office order them (Irene's). There is a sign up sheet in the church hall. Call or e-mail the church office for more information.

COFFEE HOUR

Coffee Hour is an exciting part of our congregational life. Hosting a coffee hour is a great way to celebrate a birthday or anniversary with your church family. Perhaps you can join a friend in hosting a Sunday. The deacons will be glad to assist you. A sign-up sheet is in the Church Hall or of course you can call or e-mail the church office for more information.



BIBLE STUDY

I have been working on our next Bible Study. We will be continuing to use the Yale Divinity Bible study curriculum as our guide through the study of the letter to the Hebrews. We will resume on Wednesday, March 30th from 3:30 to 4:30 in the Bishop Room. This will be a nine week study which will reveal the historical context of the scriptures, the intent behind their writing, the origins, the struggles of the community for which they were written, and the promises and advice they still hold for us today. So please join us for our first session on Wednesday, March 30th at 3:30 in the Bishop Room of the Old Academy Building. All people are welcome. Bring your friends and family.

FORGIVE YOURSELF

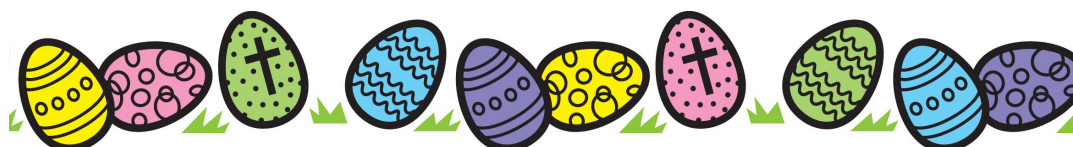
If the Lord Jesus Christ has washed you in his own blood and forgiven you all your sins, how dare you refuse to forgive yourself?

Francis MacNutt



SERVING THIS MONTH

March 2016		Confirming Deacon — Nathalie Taranto	
	Greeters	Ushers/Offering	Collectors
March 6	The Marches	Suzanne Lovejoy, Maria Seaman	The Glasers
March 13	Marj Klar	The Marches	The Twomblys
March 20	Daisy Colonnese	Vera Knapp, Nathalie Taranto	Nathalie Taranto, Carol Partridge
March 27 EASTER	Nathalie Taranto	The Glasers	Daisy Colonnese, Marianne Perkins



April 2016 Confirming Deacon — Leon March			
	Greeters	Ushers/Offering	Collectors
April 3	Marj Klar	The Marches	The Glasers
April 10	The McCartys	Vera Knapp, Nathalie Taranto	The Twomblys
April 17	Daisy Colonnese	The Glasers	Nathalie Taranto, Carol Partridge
April 24	Nathalie Taranto	The McCartys	Daisy Colonnese, Marianne Perkins

All of our members and friends are invited to serve as greeters or ushers. If you would like to participate, please call a member of the Board of Deacons or call Jeanne at the church office (203-261-2527). If you are unable to serve as assigned, please contact the confirming Deacon for the month.

2016



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5 9-10 NAPS Bunny Breakfast
6 10 AM Worship w/Communion 11AM Coffee Hour 11:30 TAC Meeting Cove	7	8	9 6:00 p.m. Simple Supper	10	11	12 Change your clock to daylight saving time
13 10 AM Worship 11AM Coffee Hour 11:30AM Deacon's Meeting	14	15 St. Luke/St. Paul Food Kitchen	16 6:00 p.m. Simple Supper	17	18	19
20 Palm Sunday 10 AM Worship 11AM Coffee Hour 11:30 TAC First Day of Spring Cove	21	22	23	24 Holy Thursday 7:30 PM Tenebrae Service	25 Good Friday Office Closed	26
27 EASTER SUNDAY 10:00 AM Worship	28 Office closed	29	30 3:30 Bible Study	31		

APRIL

2016

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

1

2

3

10 AM Worship
w/Communion
11AM Coffee Hour
11:30 AM Council
Meeting

4

5

6

7

8

9

3:30 Bible Study

Cove

10

10 AM Worship
11AM Coffee Hour

11

12

13

14

15

16

3:30 Bible Study

17

10 AM Worship
11AM Coffee Hour

18

19

FEA Meeting

20

21

22

23

3:30
Food Kitchen

3:30 Bible Study

Cove

NAPS Spring
Break Week

24

10 AM Worship
11AM Coffee Hour

25

26

27

28

29

30

3:30 Bible Study

BIBLE QUIZ

1.



While Jesus was dying on the cross, who mocked him, saying, “He saved others; he cannot save himself”?

- A. Priests
- B. Scribes
- C. Elders
- D. All of the above

2



When the Pharisees complained about the noisy crowd praising God as Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey, what did he say would shout out if the people were silent?

- A. The stones
- B. The trees
- C. The palm branches
- D. The donkey

BIBLE FACTS

The Meaning of Resurrection is not hard to trace. Mere immortality is not the Easter message. The disciples themselves probably believed in some kind of immortality even before Jesus came – in Sheol, a pale and shadowy replica of our life on earth. No, the meaning of Resurrection is *resurrection*: not the interminable dragging on of an old life, but a new life springing from death. Thus the meaning is that the fetters of evil are broken. But when Christ rose from the dead, his disciples knew that his whole life and death were held in the life of God. The cry of Jesus, “It is finished!” meant that God’s war with man’s evil had been fought and won in love. There was a Power now available, the presence of the Risen Lord, stronger than all the bondage of sins. That was the meaning, and is the meaning of the Resurrection.

George Arthur Buttrick

- 1. Answer: D (See Matthew 27:41-42.)
- 2. Answer: A (See Luke 19:40.)

NEWS FROM THE HILL . . .
THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
OF EASTON
Westport Road at Center Road
P.O. Box 37
Easton, CT 06612-0037



The church on the hill

Thought for Easter

*There is no dark despair that cannot be
Evicted from the heart's Gethsemane;
For faith is always more than unbelief
And vibrant courage triumphs over grief.*

Mary E. McCullough

*"I am the
resurrection
and the life."*
JOHN 11:25

