

# News from the Hill

The Congregational  
Church of Easton

January/  
February 2021

Minister

Rev. Amanda Ostrove

Church Council Chair

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Office Hours

Monday-Thursday

9 am to 2 pm

Friday

9am to 1 pm



## Meditations from the Pastor

**“God has a purpose behind every problem. He uses circumstances to develop our character. In fact, he depends more on circumstances to make us like Jesus than he depends on our reading of the Bible”.**

Rick Warren, 21<sup>st</sup> century Christian Author

As this pandemic continues into a new year, it can be easy to get caught up in the statistics, fear, and grief this worldwide virus invokes. This is only exasperated by the isolation of social distancing. But perhaps this could be the perfect environment for us to enter into our Lenten journey. This can be a time when we can turn off the news sources and open up our Bibles to read about the life of Jesus discovering the hope, joy, and inspiration of his life, death, and resurrection. This is the time to think less about our fears and to refocus ourselves upon what God is teaching us in these moments and how we can reach out to touch the lives of those who are need of support and care.

**Remember that sometimes it is in the hardest times of life that we find God’s hand at work** slowly shaping life on this earth and bringing people to faith. It is very much like the natural world all around. There may be snow on the ground, the winds might blow bitterly, the trees are bare and look dead, but we know that underneath all that coldness and barrenness there is great life just waiting to come alive with the Springtime sun. The same is true for life right now. Though there is great hardship and pain globally, nationally, locally, and personally, beneath all this hardship there is the promise of new life. God is in the process of doing something new and wonderful. In the meantime, lets allow our hands to be his hands in the world. **Let’s seek his inspiration, comfort, and strength together in worship, in prayer, in study, and in community (even from our homes). And let’s make our lives an reminder to all of the hope and presence of God.** To that end, our church family has a busy couple of months coming up **and there are many opportunities to change our focus from that which doesn’t build up to that which builds ourselves up spiritually, builds the church, and offers support to the world.** Read further for the Lenten Schedule, Bible Study Opportunities, Outreach news , and needs of the congregation.

## BOARD OF DEACONS

### DEACONS

Rev. Amanda, some of the Deacons, organists Carole Fanslow, plus several faithful church family members and friends, shepherded us through a safe and successful Christmastide in spite of the looming COVID-19 epidemic. Rev. Amanda is working with Carole Fanslow (organist) on a possible non-remote Christmas Eve service re-do later this summer after pandemic danger has abated.

Deacons meeting of 1-3-2021 focused on Easter which is coming up on April 4. Plans for celebrating the Lenten season, worship, and activities were discussed. Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent, falls on February 17: Rev. Amanda suggested beginning with a mini-Worship Service followed by a scriptural study of events from the Last Supper to the Crucifixion. Activities and worship services [Palm Sunday (3/28), Maundy Thursday (4/1) and Easter Sunday (4/4)], by necessity, will be remote-either Zoom or YouTube.

The Deacons continue to meet remotely and regularly the first Sunday of the month. The next meeting will be February 7, 2021 following worship. Members of our church family are welcome to visit a meeting at any time (for access to link contact Nathalie: nstaranto@att.net). All Deacon meeting minutes are readily available at the church office for your perusal.

### Looking Towards Lent

**Don't forget to mark your calendars! Lent starts on February 17<sup>th</sup> with our first Ash Wednesday Zoom Worship. This year we will be offering a zoom Lenten Bible Study. We will be studying the scriptures pertaining to the last hours and resurrection of Christ. Come with your questions, your curiosity, and your desire to connect to something more. This is a 3 session Study and each session lasts approximately 1 hour.**

**When: February 17<sup>th</sup>, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, and March 17<sup>th</sup>**

**Time: 12Noon for Ash Wednesday Worship, 7:00PM for Lenten Bible Study**

**Who: Anyone interested in spiritual development or just learning more about Christ's last moments**

## Boards and Committee

### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

#### Children's Worship and Education

##### Children's Worship and Christian Education

This year Children's worship and Christian education will be offered online. Weekly online activities will be emailed out to families by the church office. Connie Wing our Sunday school teacher has put a lot of thought into these activities and offers links to watch as well. Parents are urged to do these activities with their children either on Sundays or another day during the week to continue their religious education during this time of social distancing. We will email out the lessons to you on Fridays.

##### Bible Study

Join us for our Spring Bible Study starting on April 14<sup>th</sup> via Zoom. We will be studying Genesis: **the beginnings of our world and God's covenantal relationship with humanity and we will** discover how God has interacted with humanity throughout history and perhaps how God interacts in our lives and world today. All people are welcome to join us for one, two, or all of our sessions. If you are interested in joining us please contact Rev. Amanda Ostrove at [pastor.cchurcheaston@gmail.com](mailto:pastor.cchurcheaston@gmail.com) or at 203-261-2527.

What: Genesis

When: April 14<sup>th</sup> to June 9<sup>th</sup> 3:30-4:30

What do I Need: Bible, notepad, pencil

Who: All people from all traditions are welcome



# Lenten Calendar

Here is our holiday schedule. Please mark your calendars.

February 17<sup>th</sup> – Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday Zoom worship 12 Noon (30 minutes)

Beginning of Lenten Bible Study 7:00 PM

March 3<sup>rd</sup> – Lenten Bible Study at 7:00 PM

March 17<sup>th</sup> – Lenten Bible Study at 7:00 PM

March 28<sup>th</sup> – Palm Sunday Zoom Service 10AM

April 1<sup>st</sup> – Maundy Thursday Zoom Service 7:30PM

April 4<sup>th</sup> – Easter Morning Zoom Service 10AM



## TURNAROUND CHURCH COMMITTEE

TAC continues to meet the third Sundays of the month at 11:30AM remotely. All people are welcome to join and share thoughts and ideas for our turnaround process. We have been accessing and planning more new resident zoom sessions since they have been well received by those who participated. We are also looking into what we need to do if we want to have a virtual form of our tag sale in the Spring.

Our Cookie Walk did very well and we have decided to keep curbside pick up and preorders for coming years. We sold all boxes of cookies. We would like to thank all of our volunteers who baked, organized, filled orders, and ran cookies/sanitized/sold cookies on the day of the event. We make over \$1,200.00 on this event this year. Keep an eye on our calendar of events for any more opportunities to volunteer.

We are continuing to collect recipes to assemble a cookbook in the Spring. Right now we are collecting favorite comfort food recipes. Please send all recipes to Suzanne Lovejoy at [suzanneEL612@gmail.com](mailto:suzanneEL612@gmail.com)

## Boards and Committee

### BOARD OF FACILITIES

We want to thank all of our church members who have helped replace lights in the pre-school and who have responded to the various needs of the facilities. We have been very happy that for the time being things have been fairly quiet.

### STEWARDSHIP

We have been well underway in our stewardship campaign for 2021. We would like to send out a special thank you to all those who already sent in their pledge card. Remember our pledges help to support our current missions, allow for the development of new missions, support our functions to educate people in the scriptures and ways of Christ in the world, and allows for us to continue maintaining our beautiful historic buildings so future generations will continue to enjoy their beauty. **Everyone's pledge is important and essential to the life of our church. So if you have not already done so,** please fill out your blue pledge card and mail it back to the church. Please remember to send your cards back as soon as possible to help us plan for the coming year. Your participation helps us to continue to serve Easton and our neighboring communities.

Pledge challenge goal 2018: \$60,000.00

Current Pledges: \$62,000.00

Annual Meeting: *TBD*

### NEWS FROM THE COMMUNITY

Easton Public Library, in collaboration with Municipal Agent for the Aging Alison Witherbee, is launching *Library To Go*, a free delivery service for Easton residents who are homebound. *Library To Go* will operate every other Wednesday, beginning on October 2. Residents can request books, audiobooks, music CDs, and magazines, and have them delivered right to their door! Library Assistant Penelope Papadoulis will oversee the service. For more information or to make a request, contact Penelope at 203-261-0134 or [pjp@eastonlibrary.org](mailto:pjp@eastonlibrary.org).

Alison Witherbee, as the agent to the aging, requests that if you have an email address to please send it to her so she can include you on emails about special programs. For updates on Covid-19 vaccines check in with Alison periodically.

## Serving Schedule

Confirming and Welcoming Deacon for January — Jonathan Stock

Confirming and Welcoming Deacon for February — Sara Trup

## Worship Information

We continue to meet remotely via Zoom during this time of pandemic. If you know someone who would like to join us for worship please share their email address so I can send them a link to worship. Or share the link below.

**Zoom Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88440646436?pwd=REEzdGVlVWhFNTFwMkZSMHlpU29LZz09>

**To join by telephone:** 1-929-205-6099 Meeting ID: 884 4064 6436, Passcode: 469663



## Pastoral Care Needs

As this pandemic drags on, there may come a time when you find yourself or someone you know in need of someone to talk to. Please contact me either at the church office at 203-261-2527, by email at [pastor.cchurcheaston@gmail.com](mailto:pastor.cchurcheaston@gmail.com), or by cellphone at 860-449-4439 and I would be happy to talk to you or to contact the person in need. Please remember that for many people a friendly chat with church family members can do a lot to make this time **of isolation more bearable. Don't forget to contact your friends and people you haven't** chatted with in a while.

Flowers are the traditional decoration for Easter. We invite you to honor and remember your loved ones while helping to support the needs of our church. **This year we will be doing “virtual” flowers only due to the pandemic.** We will be including the words of remembrance and honor in our Easter morning bulletin. The cost is \$18.00 per virtual plant.



Your Name:

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

In Memory of

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In Honor of

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“Virtual” flower \_\_\_@ \$18.00 each Virtual Total \$\_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to: The Congregational Church of Easton and memo:

**“Virtual flowers”.**

Order forms with checks can be mailed or left in the church office.

# January 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 New Year's Day Offices Closed	2
3 10 am Zoom Worship w/ Communion  11:30 Dea- cons Zoom Meeting	4	5	6 Epiphany	7 12 Zoom Out- reach Meeting	8	9
10 10 am Zoom Worship	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 10 am Zoom Worship  11:30 TAC Zoom Meeting	18 Martin Luther King Jr. Day Offices Closed	19 CCGB Zoom Del- egate Meeting 6:30PM	20	21	22	23
24 10 am Zoom Worship 11:30 Council Zoom Meeting	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 10 am Zoom Worship						

# February 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 10 am Zoom Worship with Communion 11:30 Deacon's Zoom Meeting	8	9	10  6:30 Lenten Supper	11	12	13
14 10 am Zoom Worship 11:30 am TAC Zoom  Valentines Day	15	16	17  12 Ash Wednesday Zoom Worship  7PM Lenten Bible Study	18	19	20
21 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent 10 am Zoom Worship 11:30 am Zoom Annual Meeting	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Lent 10 am Zoom Worship						



NEWS FROM THE HILL . . .  
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