

The GOOD News!



MARCH 2016

The Newsletter of the First Congregational Church of Haddam
"An Open and Affirming Church"



LECTIONARY READINGS

Sunday, March 6, 2016

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Joshua 5:9-12

Psalms 32 • 2 Cor 5:16-21

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

Embracing Love

Sunday, March 13, 2016

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Isaiah 43:16-21 • Psalm 126

Phil 3:4b-14 • John 12:1-8

Something New

Sunday, March 20, 2016

PALM SUNDAY

Psalms 118:1-2, 19-29 • **Luke**

19:28-40

(Liturgy of the Palms)

Isaiah 50:4-9a • Psalm 31:9-16

Phil 2:5-11 • Luke 22:14-23:56 or

Luke 23:1-49

(Liturgy of Passion)

Into Jerusalem

Thursday, March 24, 2016

MAUNDY THURSDAY

Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14

Psalms 116:1-2, 12-19

1 Cor 11:23-26

John 13:1-17, 31b-35

Friday, March 25, 2016

GOOD FRIDAY

Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Psalms 22 • Heb 10:16-25 or

Heb 4:14-16; 5:7-9

John 18:1-19:42

Saturday, March 26, 2016

HOLY SATURDAY

Job 14:1-14 or Lam 3:1-9, 19-24

Psalms 31:1-4, 15-16 • 1 Peter 4:1-8

Mt 27:57-66 or Jn 19:38-42

Sunday, March 27, 2016

EASTER

Acts 10:34-43 or Isaiah 65:17-25

Psalms 118:1-2, 14-24

1 Cor 15:19-26 or Acts 10:34-43

John 20:1-18 or Luke 24:1-12

Resurrection Joy

In the Cross of Christ I Glory

The season of Lent is, among other things, a journey with a destination. It's a journey with Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem. The destination is not just Jerusalem: it's a Roman cross near the town dump outside the city wall. The destination of our Lenten journey with Jesus is the killing of a sacrificial victim, because, in the words of Caiaphas the High Priest, "it is better...to have one man die for the people than to have the whole nation destroyed" (John 11:50).

Christians through the centuries have found multiple meanings in the narrative of Jesus' suffering and death. One of the most popular of these meanings is the belief that Jesus died on the cross to save the rest of us from the wrath of God. According to this articulation of the atonement, we human beings are such vile, unrepentant sinners that only the sacrifice of God's beloved Son can bridge the chasm between us and God.

Atonement theology claims that in the cross of Christ, God enacts the drama that Abraham was prevented from enacting, at the moment when he raised the knife above the neck of his son Isaac. Abraham's son was spared; God's Son was not. In the phrasing of Paul's letter to the Romans, God "spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all" (Romans 8:32 KJV). Somehow the historical reality that Jesus was crucified by human actors became the theological absurdity that God was the real actor in an ancient drama of redemptive violence.



I do not subscribe to this interpretation of the crucifixion. I do not glory in the cross of Christ. I believe that the resurrection of the crucified One is God's definitive "No!" to the persistent human practice of redemptive violence. In this incarnational theology, Jesus on the cross is an image of a compassionate God, a God who suffers with us, who is sorrowful not wrathful, who is forgiving not vengeful. It is this God who is the destination of our Lenten journey with Jesus.

A reminder that the Sunday morning worship schedule for our two congregations changes in March. Beginning on Sunday, March 6, and continuing through Sunday, June 26, the Sunday schedule will switch to worship at First Congregational Church at 9:00 a.m. and at Higganum Congregational Church at 10:30 a.m. Many blessings, Pastor Doug

The Season of Lent



March Worship Plans

Sunday, March 6. Fourth Sunday in Lent. Communion.

Scripture: II Corinthians 5:16-21; Luke 15:1-32

Sermon: A Man Had Two Sons...

Sunday, March 13. Fifth Sunday in Lent.

Guest Preacher: Nancy Thody

Sunday, March 20. Palm/Passion Sunday.

Readers' Theater: Voices of the Cross

Thursday, March 24. Maundy Thursday.

Service of Communion and Tenebrae, FCCH, 7:00 p.m.

Friday, March 25. Good Friday.

Service of Seven Last Words, United Church of Chester,
12 noon – 3:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 27. Easter Sunday.

(Easter Sunrise Service, Haddam Meadows, 6:30 a.m.)

Scripture: Acts 10:34-43; Luke 24:1-11.

Sermon: An Idle Tale?

CHRISTIAN SERVICE



This project continues throughout the year. Cash register receipts from the Higganum Market are returned to the market and the church receives a portion of the total receipts. The amount is usually between \$30 and \$60 per month. The market owner, Mr. Ming is a great community activity supporter. Take a minute to visit the market. The meat is terrific and the sesame noodles are delicious. The Box Tops for Education are given to the elementary schools. These are returned and the proceeds provide for school supplies. The old eye glasses go to the Lion's Club. The empty ink cartridges are brought to Staples. Children's picture books are brought to Read to Grow who give them to families with young children. By recycling your trash you can help someone else and decrease the amount of trash in the land-fill.

FOOD FOR AMAZING GRACE

Each week we collect food items that are brought to the Amazing Grace Food Pantry in Middletown. We collect tuna, mayonnaise, cooking oil, peanut butter, jelly, spaghetti sauce, pasta, canned fruit and cereal. This pantry is used by hundreds of people each month. Our little bit helps to feed hungry families.

When the month has a 5th Sunday, we collect paper goods for Haddam Public Health.

PENNIES FROM HEAVEN



There was \$37.00 in the Pennies from Heaven tube at the end of the month. This money will be sent to the Haddam Back Pack project. This project provides weekend back packs full of protein rich food and snacks for about 30 school children who are at risk of being hungry on the weekend.

If you have an idea of an agency that would benefit from small donations from this project please notify the minister or the members of the Christian Service committee.

A Heartfelt Thank You From Deb Livingston

On January 29, 2016 the Christian Education Committee of the First Congregational Church of Haddam held a Pasta Dinner Benefit Fundraiser to raise money for my family and me. I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank the committee as well as everyone else involved in that event.

I would like to begin with a little background information about my battle with cancer. When I was thirty-four I was diagnosed with a rare form of breast cancer called Inflammatory Breast Cancer (IBC). Following the diagnosis, I received eight rounds of aggressive chemotherapy followed by a bilateral mastectomy and thirty-two days of radiation. Testing at the conclusion of this treatment indicated that I was now NED, No Evidence of Disease, and I remained that way for over two years. However, in 2012 my doctors found a small tumor on my lung which resulted in surgery to remove not only that tumor but my ovaries as well. I was again pronounced NED and stayed that way for over a year. Unfortunately, this past July they found four more small tumors in my lungs and a tumor on my liver. After three unsuccessful treatment procedures, I am currently on a new regimen, receiving chemotherapy treatments every Monday, three weeks on and one week off. Thankfully this seems to be working as my results from my February CT scan were very encouraging.

Over the past few months, my church has surrounded me with love and prayers, and it outdid itself with its fundraising efforts for my family. I'd like to share with you my experience at the main fundraising event, the Pasta Dinner Benefit. My son and I arrived at the church around 5:20 p.m. on Friday, February 29th, after walking the short distance from my house on Saybrook Road. My husband, Dan, stayed behind to wait for a few people who were parking at our house and then planned on heading over to the dinner. When I arrived, there were people already waiting outside to come in. I went downstairs to the dining area and gave as many people as I could a hug and a thank you before the dinner started. Incredibly, the entire southern and eastern walls of the room were lined with tables covered with donated raffle prizes and silent auction items. There were over forty wonderful items! By 5:40 p.m. there wasn't an empty seat in the house. By 6:00 p.m. not only was every seat taken but there were people standing around the perimeter of the room talking, laughing, and socializing, all waiting to be seated for dinner. You could barely see the walls there were so many people standing. It was a sight that took my breath away. Knowing that all these people came out to help me and my family was overwhelming to say the least. I spent the entire dinner walking around thanking everyone for coming. Everyone was in such good spirits. There were people from the community socializing with others that they had not seen in a while. My church family was working so hard in the kitchen cooking and preparing food, washing dishes (because the dish washer stopped working), seating guests, waiting tables, and selling tickets. Everyone had a smile on their face. Even at 10 o'clock, when all the work was finished, there were members of my church family still making jokes and smiling.

I feel so blessed to be part of such a loving community. I want to thank everyone on the Christian Education Committee for organizing and working so hard on this fundraiser. I also want to thank all those who helped at the dinner, attended the dinner, and those who couldn't attend the dinner but gave a donation anyway. A special thank you goes to Nancy Soneson, the FCCH Christian Education Director for setting up a Go Fund Me page, to which so many have donated. I would also like to say a huge thank you to Suzanne Wintsch who was the mastermind behind this entire night. I can not say enough about her generosity and kindness.

Sincerely,

Deborah Livingston



Souper Bowl of Caring Update

Our youth joined young people throughout the country in collecting money in soup pots on Super Bowl Sunday. The *Souper* Bowl of Caring is a simple effort to “love the Lord our God...and love our neighbors”. By the end of the morning service, the youth had collected \$137 for St. Vincent DePaul Soup Kitchen in Middletown!



College Care Packages

On March 13th, the Christian Education Committee will be making care packages for our sixteen FCCH college students.

If you would like to donate items to go into these packages, you can either contact Nancy Soneson or drop items off at the church office. We are looking for items such as candy, granola bars, handwritten notes, chips, microwave popcorn, etc.

Children’s Choir Rehearsals

The Children’s Choir will rehearse each Sunday in March, during Sunday school class time and following the morning worship service at 10:15 a.m.

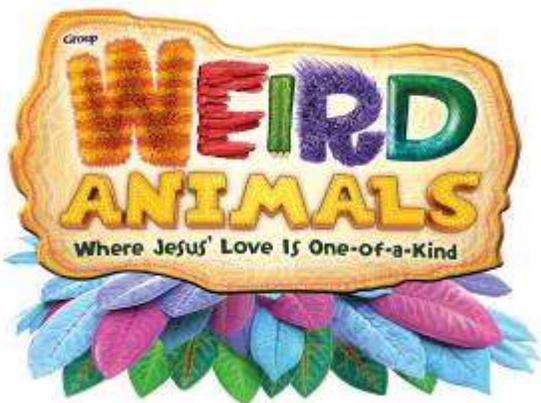


The Children’s Choir will be performing *You Gave* during the Easter Sunday service!

Annual Easter Egg Hunt ~ March 27th Following the 9 am service

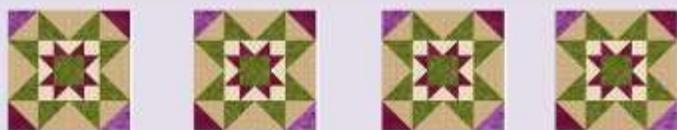


Candy donations can be dropped off in the church vestibule.



SAVE THE DATE Vacation Bible School

July 11- July 15
Celebration Sunday July 17
Register at www.haddamcongregation.org



COMMUNITY QUILTING GROUP

The Community Quilting Group meets on the first Wednesday in the morning, 9:30-12:30 and on the third Wednesday in the evening, 6:30-9. Come and learn to quilt!

This group is open to everyone!

Contact Ginny Evensen for more information
860-301-3964 or vrgnevnsn@aol.com.



Mika Carlin	March 2 nd
Jillian LaRosa	March 16 th
Alison Halligan	March 7 th
Wyatt Munster	March 10 th
Daniel LaRosa	March 23 rd

Silver Lake Conference Center Summer Camp

Registration Now Open!

Thank you to the following people who made
The Livingston Family Pasta Dinner Benefit
such a success!

We raised over \$8,000 for Deb and her family!

Nancy Albert	Dawn Alger	Emily Alger
Ron Alger	Alex Battistoni	Brigitte Battistoni
Kristin Battistoni	Mike Battistoni	Jan Berry
Patty Blodgett	Paul Blodgett	Sally Blodgett
Shelley Bobbish	Ethan Campbell	Joann Courtright
Mandy Chadwick	Sue Craffey	Bari Edmondson
John Edmondson	Ginny Evensen	Amy Harlow
Sadie Harlow	Alicia Harriman	Ava Harriman
Juliette Harriman	Bridget Harry	Olivia Harry
June Lamoureux	Norm Manning	Jeanne Messick
Cynthia Nicaastro	Sabine Nyenhuis	Heather Rettberg
Eric Rettberg	Colton Soneson	Mark Soneson
Nancy Soneson	Carter Steinhilper	Hayden Steinhilper
Missy Steinhilper	Missy Thompson	Tracy Thompson
Jordan Tupay	Kris Tupay	Karen Vencus
Carly Rettberg	Chris Williams	Thomas Williams
Suzanne Wintsch	Jonathan Wintsch	Christine Zacarelli

*Thank you to our
The Livingston Family Pasta Dinner Benefit
Raffle & Silent Auction Donors*

Nehemiah Brainerd House B & B
Durham Fitness
Teri's Package Store
Teri Everett Bookkeeping & Tax
Hairpinz
Carmel's on the Extension
The Mad Hatter Boutique
Goodspeed's Station
Body Essentials
Whole Harmony
Jack's Country Restaurant
The FCCH CE Committee
Denise Bouchard
Nancy Thody
Nancy Soneson
Jeanne Messick
Rose & Rich Benoit

Indian Springs Golf Course
Teri Everett Park Lane Jewelry
Vitality Spa
Deb's Restaurant
Jerry's Pizza
Matty's Sports Bar
Madison's Secret Nail Salon
Goodspeed Opera House
Lindsey Lehet
Stretch Studio
The Community Quilting Group
The Blodgett Family
Amy Harlow
Eric Lundin
Ginny Evensen
Dawn Alger & Aunt Gloria
Christine Zacarelli



A Huge Thank You to

Pizzeria Da Vinci's of Higganum
Pizzeria Da Vinci's of Old Lyme
HK Dairy Bar

For their generous donation of all the food!



Warm thoughts can make
the sun a little brighter,
the sky a little bluer,
the world a little nicer.

Dear First Congregational
Church of Haddam,
Thank-you for your donation
of hats, mittens, gloves and
scarves. We are grateful
you thought of us. Your
donation will directly assist
women and children in need.
Through the generosity of those
who donate we are able to
reach out to families
throughout Middlesex County
and Connec.
ABC Women's Center

Help Decorate our Sanctuary!



A floral arrangement sign-up
chart is posted in the vestibule.
Please sign up to provide
flowers for our altar on any
Sunday.

They can be in celebration of a special event or
in memory of a loved one – any reason will do!



New! Medical Transportation to Middletown

Public Transportation for all ages serving
Chester, Clinton, Deep River, East Haddam,
Durham, Essex, Haddam, Killingworth, Lyme,
Old Lyme, Old Saybrook & Westbrook

Connections to Southeast Area Transit buses in New London,
CT Transit New Haven in Madison, Middletown Transit and
CT Transit Hartford in Middletown

Call 860-554-0551

www.9towntransit.com

9 Town Transit is Operated by the Estuary Transit District



The Smarter Choice for Care
MIDDLESEX HOSPITAL

**Bereavement
Support Groups**

Middlesex Hospital

Every first and third Monday
5pm-6:30pm
Conference Room A

One MacDonough Place

Every second and fourth Wednesday
10am-11:30am

Please sign in at the front desk.

*(This is the Hospital's assisted living facility on the
corner of Main Street extension and MacDonough
Place)*

Essex Library

Every first and third Tuesday
2pm-3pm

Every second and fourth Tuesday
5pm-6pm
33 West Avenue, Essex
860-767-1560

For more information contact:

Chaplain Dennis McCann
Hospital Chaplain, 203-640-5821