



The GOOD News!



April 2016

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



LECTIONARY READINGS

Sunday, April 3, 2016

Second Sunday of Easter

Acts 5:27-32

Psalm 118:14-29 or Psalm 150

Rev 1:4-8

John 20:19-31

Resurrection Witness

Sunday, April 10, 2016

Third Sunday of Easter

Acts 9:1-6, (7-20)

Psalm 30

Rev 5:11-14

John 21:1-19

The Way Forward

Sunday, April 17, 2016

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Acts 9:36-43

Psalm 23

Rev 7:9-17

John 10:22-30

Life-giving Acts

Saturday, April 24, 2016

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Acts 11:1-18

Psalm 148

Rev 21:1-6

John 13:31-35

Imagine

From Stumbling Block to Cornerstone



For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

—I Corinthians 1:22-24

The month of April, in the words of the poet T. S. Eliot, "is the cruelest month, breeding/Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing/Memory and desire, stirring/Dull roots with spring rain" (*The Waste Land*). In the northern hemisphere, April is the first full month of spring; in the southern hemisphere, it's the first full month of fall.

Another way to imagine the month of April: resurrection season. In both hemispheres, in the flow not of the seasons but of the Christian story of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, we who follow Jesus are being invited, even exhorted, to reflect on the resonance of his resurrection for our faith. Easter Sunday may have come and gone, but Easter faith is an ongoing unfolding miracle.

Or not. The Apostle Paul recognized early on that the gospel of Christ crucified was a "stumbling block" (the Greek word is *skándalon*) to Jews and "foolishness" to Gentiles. The scandal: No one expected the Messiah to die the death of a failed insurrectionist. The foolishness: If God was in Christ, then God died on Good Friday, which makes no sense.

And yet. The Crucified One is also the Risen One, to whom God has given "all authority" (Matthew 28:18). God was indeed in Christ, reconciling us to God and one another, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:19). This is the good news, the Easter miracle, then and now. The power of God and the wisdom of God: the cross is empty, the tomb is empty, the font is filled with water, the table is set, the gospel of reconciliation breaks forth like the dawn into our broken and beautiful world.

"The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone" (Mark 12:10, quoting Psalm 118:22). Let us rejoice in this ongoing unfolding miracle!

Peace and blessings,

Pastor Doug

SAVE-THE-DATE!

for our annual
**CHURCH GROUNDS
CLEAN-UP**

Sunday, May 1st
following worship

Please bring rakes and shovels
and edgers.

We will be preparing the beds
for mulch.

Thank You!

April Worship Plans

- Sunday, April 3. Second Sunday of Easter. Communion.
 - Scripture: Acts 5:27-32; John 20:19-31
 - Sermon: Blessed Are Those Who Have Not Seen
- Sunday, April 10. Third Sunday of Easter.
 - Scripture: Deuteronomy 30:9-14; Luke 10:25-37
 - Sermon: Which of These Three...Was a Neighbor?
- Sunday, April 17. Fourth Sunday of Easter.
 - Scripture: Deuteronomy 24:14-15; Matthew 20:1-15
 - Sermon: Are You Envious Because I Am Generous?
- Sunday, April 24. Fifth Sunday of Easter.
 - Pastor Doug preaching at FCCH, 9:00 a.m.
 - Guest preacher, David Bell, preaching at HCC, 10:30 a.m. (*"Neutral pulpit" for nearby church*)

SHARED TRANSITION MINISTRY TEAM

The purpose of this team is to focus on how the transition is going and to give confidential support for Pastor Doug. It will monitor and evaluate the progress of the transition and in the process look for future opportunities for collaboration by the two churches.

Should you have any comments, suggestions or feedback about how the transition and/or shared ministry is going, please speak to one of the members of the Team:

First Cong Church of Haddam representatives:
Cynthia Nicastro, Steve Bull and Jeanne Messick

Higganum Congregational Church representatives:
Sue Kocsis, Lise Thayer and Ginny Murphy



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. 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.

Thanks you for your monthly contributions:

- Week 1: Tuna Fish & Mayonnaise
- Week 2: Peanut Butter & Jelly
- Week 3: Cereal & Vegetable Oil
- Week 4: Pasta Sauce & Canned Fruit
- Week 5: Paper Products

PENNIES FROM HEAVEN

BRING US YOUR PENNIES!

This money will be sent to the Haddam Back Pack project which 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.



FCCH Bread For Heat Ministry Needs Your Help!

Join our bread making team!

We make the dough on Thursday mornings, bake on Friday mornings, and sell on Friday afternoons 3:30-6:30 at the Higganum Village Farmer’s Market throughout the summer.

All proceeds go to the Haddam Fuel Bank.

If you have any questions about this ministry

Please email or call Ginny Evensen
yrgnevnsn@aol.com / 860-345-8204

SAVE THE DATES:

We will be serving dinner at



Sunday, April 17th

You are invited to come and help cook, serve the dinner and eat with the guests.

MAKE-A-BLANKET DAY:



We have been invited to join the folks at Higganum Congregational Church on **Tuesday, April 19th** to make fleece blankets for the children at Riverview Hospital in Middletown, the state’s psychiatric hospital for children. We will be working on them from 10am to 2pm and 6pm to 8pm. *No sewing skills required.* Here’s a chance for us to work together to provide comfort for children in the hospital.

Look for the sign-up sheet at coffee hour.



May 7th - 8:30am - 1pm

Give us your junk and we will turn it into mission money.

Prayers, Joys and Concerns

Please include the following in your prayers:

- Merle Brookes**
- Susan Purdy**
- Emma Becker**
- Amanda Lisitano**
- Nick Bacarro**
- Colleen** as she hopes for a liver transplant (*Donna Turnage*)
- Inge Nyenhuis** as she recovers from heart surgery. (*Sabine's mom*)
- Deb Livingston**
- Nancy Weber** has been diagnosed with breast cancer (*Patty Blodgett's sister*)
- Suzanne Wintsch** as she mourns the sudden passing of a client
- The Torello family** as they grieve
- Marilyn McAlee** has been diagnosed with cervical cancer
- Candy Casale** on the death of her father Cecil Card
- Cailee & Michael Fairchild** on the passing of their dad, Jon

Please include our friends from Higganum in your prayers:

- Nate & Amy Tyack** as they grieve the deaths of Liberty and Prairie, and as Amy battles cancer. (*Nate is a childhood friend of Kelly Burns*)
- Mark & Rose Callahan** as they struggle with illnesses. (*Theresa Malone*)

Prayers of Joy and Thanks:

- Ginny & Richard** are celebrating eleven years together – “a gift unexpected!” (*Ginny Evensen*)
- Bari Edmondson** is doing well after knee replacement surgery.
- Eileen Mills** has returned to teaching at HKMS after heart surgery.
- Anita & Chris Carlin** as they celebrate their 11th wedding anniversary and Anita’s birthday!

Laura & Gene Porter celebrate the birth of their second great-grandchild! Harper was born in Pittsburg on March 17th.

Communion Education

Communion education will take place during Sunday school class time on Sunday, April 17th. During class, children will learn the answers to such questions as: “What is Communion?”, “How does it relate to me?”, “Why do we have grape juice and bread?”, and “What was the Last Supper?” We encourage all students to attend.



**Haddam Meadows
River Clean Up**

April 23, 2016
(Rain date: April 30)
9 am – noon

Pizza and refreshments following.

Come help keep Haddam Meadows and the CT River banks clean for wildlife (and human life!) This event is open to both adults and youth. Please contact Tracy Thompson if you would like to participate. Community service hours awarded to high school students.



Reese Timothy April 3rd

Vacation Bible School

July 11 – 15
Celebration Sunday, July 17

9 a.m. – noon

Register at HaddamCongChurch.org

Age 4 – 5th grade

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.

Coffee Hour

Join us in Fellowship Hall each Sunday following worship for a time of Fellowship & Refreshments!

This month coffee hour is hosted by the Prudential Committee.



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!

SUMMER CAMP

Silver Lake Conference Center
Summer Camp
Registration Now Open!

Kids Page

SHAVING CREAM EARTH

God created this wonderful world and told us to care for it. Remember that by making a unique painting.



What you need:

- A cookie sheet
- White shaving cream
- A wooden craft stick
- Paint (blue and green)
- A straw
- A paper plate

What you do:

1. On the cookie sheet, spray shaving cream in a circle (the same size as the bottom of the paper plate). Smooth it out with the craft stick.
2. Squirt the blue and green paint on top of the shaving cream in loopy, squiggly patterns. Swirl the paint around with the straw.
3. Place the bottom of the paper plate on top of the paint. Press it down gently so the whole plate bottom is covered in paint.
4. Lift up the plate and gently remove excess shaving cream with the stick.
5. After the painting dries, hang it on your wall.

PUZZLE

A SPECIAL GIFT

Give thanks to God for this amazing planet, which he filled with people, animals and plants.

Directions: Following the code below, fill in the blanks to complete the Bible verse. Then color the earth.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



The _____ is _____, and
 _____, the
 _____, and _____
 _____ 24:1, NIV

Answer: The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it. Psalm 24:1, NIV