



The North Church

BEACON

The deadline for the next BEACON is at **9 a.m. Monday March 14, 2011**. Send entries to beacon@fccucc.org.

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 United Church of Christ
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March 6, 2011

Worship

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Mission & Outreach

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Calendar - March

Looking Ahead in Worship

March 6 - Last Sunday after Epiphany - Transfiguration Sunday

8:30 a.m. - Chapel worship with communion.

10:00 a.m. - Sanctuary worship with communion, the Meetinghouse Choir and Sunday School through the eighth grade. John McCall will give the message and fellowship time follows in Wright Pavilion.

March 9 - Ash Wednesday

7:00 a.m. - Breakfast in Wright Pavilion, followed by communion in the sanctuary at 7:30 a.m.

7:30 p.m. - Sanctuary Worship

March 13 - First Sunday in Lent

8:30 a.m. - Chapel worship

10:00 a.m. - Sanctuary worship with the Meetinghouse Choir and Sunday School through the eighth grade. *Moving Spirit* liturgical dancers will join us; John McCall will give the message centering on "Testing" and fellowship time follows in Wright Pavilion.

March 20 - Second Sunday in Lent

8:30 a.m. - Chapel worship

10:00 a.m. - Sanctuary worship with the Meetinghouse Choir and Sunday School through the eighth grade. We'll welcome new members. Elsa Peters will give the message centering on "Calling," and fellowship time follows in Wright Pavilion.

PLEASE: remember to bring non-perishable items for our food pantry. The need is greater than ever.



IN OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Ongoing prayers: David Smart home from Dallas after open-heart surgery; Sherry Jacques continuing her recovery from surgery. Roger Dolan, Harriett MacKeil, and Beth DeTine.

In our extended family:

Greg Wyman and family on the death of his father **Lee Wyman** in Florida after a long illness; Gary Roberts and his mother Elizabeth, following the death of his father, her husband, **Clinton Roberts**, after a long illness; Ruth Bonney on the recent death of her sister **Charlene Leiser** in Indiana; John and Sarah Brownell on the birth of their first child, a daughter **Molly Katherine Brownell**, February 23. Proud grandparents include Bill and Elaine Brownell.

IF YOU OR A FAMILY MEMBER IS HOSPITALIZED...

Please let us know by phone or email. John (jbm@fccucc.org), Elsa (elsa@fccucc.org) and Beth Harris-Hess (trained lay visitor) regularly check the hospitals. But it's often difficult to find the names of parishioners in the hospitals. The *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)* of 1996 has resulted in significant tightening of access to patient lists so we may not know you're hospitalized unless you tell us.

Death and Dying

As often as we change the prayers and hymns in our Sunday liturgy, I always use the same liturgy when memorializing the dead. Well, maybe not always. But almost always. I turn to some of my favorite Biblical words to recall the things that we don't understand:

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

I always read all eleven verses -- including that bit about God making everything suitable in its own time (Ecclesiastes 3:1-11). I don't claim to understand these words. I don't try to explain them. I offer them because they hint at something I don't think I'll ever fully understand. Namely, life is short. Death always comes. Sometimes too soon.

It's a reality that strikes me every time Lent begins. In this morbid season, we step ever so slowly toward the cross. Sure. There's a happy ending. There is new life after that torturous death -- but that's not how our lives end. When the end comes, there is no resurrection. Not in this body. Not in this skin. There may be life everlasting but life as we know it ceases to be. Lent forces me to face that reality. Every year, I consider what the meaning of life might be. This year, as Lent begins, I'll ask that question with the Confirmation class. As the season continues, I'll get to ask those questions in an intentional study called **This Season** that asks those questions that we rarely ask about the end of our own lives. Yes, we'll talk about death. We'll talk about end-of-life care and what it means to have a good death, but for me, these conversations will always remind me about how I choose to live. To talk about the reality of death -- to actually finalize the draft of my will that I've been writing for over a year, to get that health care proxy signed and to even consider the elements of my own funeral service -- I hope that the verbs we'll use in worship each Sunday will remind me of the passion for this life. To cherish it. To protect it. To make it my own.

I hope that you'll join me on this journey. Whether you find the reminder of your own mortality in Lent or you need some loving cajoling from church friends to consider your own death or if you're heart is full from the loss of friends and loved ones, I hope you'll find some space to heal and wonder about what this life means. I hope you'll find the space among your church family to cherish and protect this life as you make it your own.



STEEPLE LIGHTING

The steeple is lighted the week of **March 20** in loving memory of **Judith Leeman** by her loving husband Henry Leeman, brothers William Angell, Richard Angell and Robert Angell and sisters Lynn Angell, Dianne Burns and Deborah Thayer.

ALTAR MEMORIALS

The flowers on the altar on **February 27** were given in loving memory of **Kathleen and George Doering and Daniel A. BaRoss** from the Family of Robert P. BaRoss.

THANK YOU

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our ministers and my Church family for your prayers, well wishes, calls, visits, flowers, emotional and spiritual support during my recent hospitalization at MMC and recovery time. It really helped me get through this trying time in my life and I really appreciate each and every one of your concerns. Thank you very much.

God bless you all,
Sherry Jacques

Living into Lent

Verb forms make a difference. It matters whether we claim that we were tested rather than that we are testing. The latter reminds us that it continues. It goes on into the future. So it is with the stories we hear in this season. These stories are true because of the ways that we engage them. We haven't figured it all out. It's still being worked out. We're still trying to understand.

And so, this Lent, we'll center ourselves around these verbs looking forward to what we might learn

together as we seek resurrection in this life.

Lent One (March 13): **Testing**
 Lent Two (March 20): **Calling**
 Lent Three (March 27): **Lamenting**
 Lent Four (April 3): **Living**
 Lent Five (April 10): **Disappointing**
 Lent Six (April 17): **Longing**
 Holy Thursday (April 21): **Remembering**
 Good Friday (April 22): **Grieving**
 Easter (April 24): **Rising**

John McCall & Elsa A. Peters

Consider Joining Our Church Family

Are you new to the church? Have you been worshipping for a few weeks or few months (or few years!)? Have you been around for a long time and never (quite) gotten around to becoming a member?

You're warmly invited to join us **Monday, March 7, 7 - 9 p.m.** in Wright Pavilion for an informal **Inquirers' Meeting** where we'll get to know each other, talk about the church, and

answer questions so you can decide whether you're ready to become a member. New members will be welcomed during our worship service on March 20.

Please call the church office (799-3361) or send us an email (office@fccucc.org) to say you'll be there.

John McCall & Elsa A. Peters

Become a Lay Visitor

Lay visitors have been an important part of our shared ministry over the years. A friendly call to someone who's shut-in, grieving, or dealing with declining health, can be a significant reminder of the congregation's love.

Please consider this invitation to a brief meeting on **Sunday, March 6, 11:30 a.m.** in the Davidson Lounge. We'll give a brief overview of lay

visitation and ask for an indication of interest in being matched with one or two folks for you to visit every two months or so, as you're able.

For more information contact John (jbm@fccucc.org) or Elsa (elsa@fccucc.org).

Stop Bullying this Lent

This is the journey that our Sunday School children will go on this Lent. They will follow the stories that guide us through the season from Ash Wednesday to Easter. They will explore their meaning using the resource from the Seasons of the Spirit curriculum, but they will be offered a special focus on a topic that has appeared so often in the news this year: Bullying.

The Sunday School teachers have been offered a supplemental curriculum to use as they feel is appropriate to their classrooms that evokes both the scriptures and the realities that face our kids.

There is another resource for parents and mentors which provide a snapshot of what might have been

This Season: This Lent

After lots of conversation and a wonderful lunch provided by Scott Berry, the Adult Faith Formation Committee made the decision to talk about death and dying this Lent. (Makes you wonder what happened at that meeting, doesn't it?)

At about this time last year, the Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) of the UCC were trying to figure out the very same thing. In 2009, a resolution that came before General Synod 27 that introduced the topic of physician aided suicides. The faithful delegates and members of the UCC decided this was too big a topic and invited JWM to create a working group to engage congregations in the topics of death and dying. This resulted in a study guide released in 2010. With the blessing of the Adult Faith Formation Committee, these resources have been adapted for our congregations' use in

explored in Sunday School so the conversation can continue at home.

The children will be given a calendar for their personal use to mark the days that they complimented another student or stated their own needs or successfully completed a whole day without calling anyone any names. Each child will be asked to make their own commitment so that bullying can truly be something that doesn't happen in our community. Whether you are a parent or a mentor, I hope that you'll join me in being very intentional about the language we use to affirm and hurt those around us. Who knows? Maybe you want to keep a calendar too.

Elsa A. Peters
elsa@fccucc.org

a study called *This Season* to explore the range of choices which surround dying and death - hospice care, advance directives, removal of life support, and other issues.

There will be two opportunities to come on this journey with us - one at **6:30 p.m. Monday nights (Mar. 14 - Apr. 18)** and another at **10:30 a.m. Tuesday mornings (Mar. 15 - Apr. 19)**. This journey will unfold as follows:

Week One: The Wholeness of Creation
Week Two: The Challenge of Death
Week Three: Dying Well - A Good Death
Week Four: The Confidence of Hope
Week Five: Healing - The Restoration of Hope
Week Six: In the Company of Others

Elsa A. Peters
elsa@fccucc.org

THE DISCOVERY CENTER

This ministry of our church is **now accepting registration for 3, 4, and 5 year olds for 2011-2012.**

- We are a hands on, child centered learning environment where kids learn through doing and playing.
- A loving and caring place to introduce your child to their first preschool experience.
- Our pre-K class prepares children for kindergarten through a Developmentally Appropriate curriculum that focuses on sharing, recognizing our name and letters of the alphabet.

Give us a call today and mention this ad for new incoming parents and get 1/2 off your registration fee! Contact Pam Howard for questions or to set up a tour at 799-3361, x 107.

PARENTING TEENS FAITHFULLY

These conversations, began by the Family Faith Formation Committee, will continue for parents of teens and pre-teens. We've already found how parents can support each other through these pre-teen and teen years.

Dating & Sex
Sunday Mar. 27, 11:30 a.m.

Internet
Sunday May 8, 11:30 a.m.



SENIOR ACTIVITIES

Thursday, March 3 - 1:00 p.m. SAGE meeting.

Thursday, March 10 - The Hilltop Guild has kindly invited Seniors to attend their meeting, which is at **2:00 p.m.** Alan Hawkins will speak about Native Americans and specifically about those in Maine.

Thursday, March 17 - will be a **soup luncheon at noon** in Wright Pavilion. Please RSVP by March 14.

Thursday, March 24 - Please join us at **9:00 a.m.** for **breakfast at I-Hop.**

Thursday, April 7 - 1:00 p.m. SAGE meeting.

GUILD MEETING MARCH 10

Will you join us for the next Guild meeting? **Alan Hawkins** will be speaking about **Native Americans**. Alan has spent a lifetime accumulating knowledge and artifacts and will share them with us on **Thursday March 10 at 2:00.**

We invite anyone who is interested to join us for our afternoon meeting. An interesting topic, fellowship, and delicious goodies – how can you pass it up? If you would like to attend and are not a member of Guild, please call Kathy Cotter at 799-4808.

One Great Hour of Sharing

“Sharing Brings Joy”: - that’s the theme of this year’s **One Great Hour of Sharing** offering.

As we share our gifts, we live in the world as God intends it to be. Our acts of sharing are transformed into actual mercy and justice. One Great Hour of Sharing is administered by Wider Church Ministries of the United Church of Christ. By partnering with agencies like Global Ministries and Church World Service, it provides support to people in over 80 countries. When you make a gift to the offering,

you become a partner in the refugee, disaster relief, and community development efforts of the UCC in the United States and internationally.

This year, One Great Hour of Sharing will be received on **April 3**. OGHS envelopes will be placed in the pew racks. Make your check payable to First Congregational Church, UCC and write OGHS on the memo line.

The Mission & Outreach Team thanks you in advance for “sharing your joy”.

Mission Trip Planning

There’s a lot that goes into making our first mission trip happen. There are fundraisers to host. There is energy to be created – and there’s always learning to be done.

When we consider going on a mission trip, we have to think about why we’re doing this. Why would any church group travel all the way from South Portland to Cherryfield? What does our faith say about these things

and why should we consider the ways that we do mission? All of these questions are central to this trip, so our group of 16 participants (which may still grow) will ask these questions together on the evenings below. Interested? Talk with Elsa at 799-3361, x 104 or elsa@fccucc.org.

Wednesday April 13 at 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday May 11 at 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday June 8 at 7:00 p.m.

Building Dreams: Spaghetti Dinner & Auction

Our first fundraiser for the 2011 Mission Trip is on **SATURDAY, MARCH 26, a SPAGHETTI DINNER & AUCTION!** Come and enjoy a delicious dinner followed by a grand auction!! Our auctioneer will be Tom Saturley! PLEASE consider what you can contribute to the auction:

- Tickets to a sporting event, play, movie, museum.
- Gift certificates for restaurants, stores, travel, memberships.
- Create a “theme basket” such as chocolate, gardening, games, etc.
- Homemade foods or handmade crafts.

- Teach something you know: Sports, music, sailing, art, etc.
- Provide a service such as babysitting, yard work, computer help, shopping.
- “Re-gift” something you’ve enjoyed but haven’t worn out: Books, games, movies, music, artwork, sports equipment, etc.

If you have something you are willing to donate, please contact Deb Theriault (799-8990), Judy Dow (749-0862), or Jodie Ramsey (767-0246). Thanks very much for your consideration, and we look forward seeing lots of folks on March 26!!



**SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AT
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**
ATTENTION: ALL GRADUATING SENIORS AND
STUDENTS CURRENTLY ENROLLED IN POST-HIGH
SCHOOL EDUCATION

YOUR CHURCH CAN HELP YOU WITH SCHOOL COSTS. SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE CHURCH OFFICE AND THE DEADLINE IS **TUESDAY, MARCH 15, 2011.**

- ✓ For the First Congregational Church Scholarship, you will need to complete only the General Scholarship Fund Application.
- ✓ For the Pond Scholarship, you will need to complete the General Scholarship Fund Application, the Loretta Thompson Pond Scholarship Application and the Church Financial Aid Form.

The Loretta Thompson Pond Scholarship, established in 1995, is for graduating high school seniors who are members of this church. Criteria for the Pond Scholarship include service to the church and the community; involvement in church activities, academic achievement, and financial need. Letters of reference and written essays are required in the application process for the Pond Scholarship.

The General Scholarship Fund is set aside for any church members who are studying at the college, university or graduate level. Award considerations include financial need, and church involvement during and after high school. Questions? Please call the office at 799-3361.

Scholarship Committee: Debra Andrews, Scott Ayre, Eben Marsh, John McCall, Jeri Sides, Chris Zechman

Youth Ministry Schedule

Sunday, March 13th:
Diversity Night @ the church. 4 - 7p.m.

Sunday, March 20th:
Craft Time. Right after church until 1:30 p.m. Learn a couple of crafts or bring a craft that you can teach everyone!

Saturday, March 26th:
YM goes to the **Pirates!** Game time is 7:45, meet at the church parking lot at 6:45 p.m. Cost TBA.

Saturday, April 9th:
Lock In #2!!! Meet at church at 7 p.m. for fun and memories and we will head to worship together in the morning.

Sunday April 17th:
Celebrate **Earth Day** with YM with a Picnic at Bradbury Mountain in Pownal. Cost for Park fee is \$3 per person. If you are under 11, cost is \$1.

Steve Ferris
youth@fccucc.org

FAIR TRADE COFFEE

The next Fair Trade Coffee orders will be taken after 10 a.m. worship on **March 13** and **March 20**. The expected pick up date for these orders is April 10.

Dolores Broberg
fairtrade@fccucc.org

SPRING RUMMAGE SALE

Spring is coming! And so is the **Rummage/Garage Sale** on **April 30th** with **NO SNOW!**

Please start cleaning out those things you have not been using and are taking up space as someone else will find them valuable.

I look forward to it, as always... you can start dropping off items in Guptill Hall on March 15th.

Remember that I am here if you need some help.

Prudy Wiggins
rummagesale@fccucc.org
799-5705

SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks to the Monday morning Bridge Group for their donation of \$150.00 to heat Wright Pavilion.

Cyndi Alden
Business Manager

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