



The North Church

BEACON

The deadline for the next BEACON is *Friday, April 20, 2012*. Send entries to beacon@fccucc.org.

First Congregational Church
 United Church of Christ
 South Portland, Maine 04106
 Phone (207) 799-3361
 Fax (207) 799-4095
 E-mail: office@fccucc.org
<http://www.fccucc.org>

March 26, 2012

Worship

1

Pastor and Pew

2

S L & W / Youth

3

Seniors / E G & F

4

Mission & Outreach

5-6

Administration

6

Calendar – April

7

Looking Ahead in Worship

April 1 - Palm Sunday

Metaphor: Palms

8:30 a.m. - Chapel worship.

10:00 a.m. - Sanctuary worship with the Meetinghouse Choir. Sunday school classes through the sixth grade and Worship Discovery for grades 7 & 8.

April 5 - Maundy Thursday

7:30 p.m. - Sanctuary worship and communion.

April 6 - Good Friday

6:00 p.m. - Family worship service inspired by Tomie de Paolo's *Now One Foot, Now the Other*.

6:00 p.m. - Soup supper in Guptill Hall hosted by the Spiritual Life & Worship Team.

7:30 p.m. - Worship with readings and Faure's *Requiem* with the Meetinghouse Choir.

8:00 p.m. - Vigil begins in the chapel.

April 8 - Easter Sunday

Metaphor: Empty Tomb

6:00 a.m. - Sunrise service with communion at Fort Williams near the flag pole.

9:00 a.m. - Sanctuary worship with Meetinghouse Choir and brass. **American Sign Language** interpreted for the deaf. John McCall will give the message.

11:00 a.m. - Sanctuary worship with Meetinghouse Choir and brass. John McCall will give the message.

OUR GOOD FRIDAY - EASTER VIGIL has some gaps! Please sign up to join the watch-keepers, offering to be in the chapel for two hours during one of the following periods: **Saturday, April 7**, 2-4 a.m., 12 noon - 2 p.m., 6-8 p.m., and 8-10 p.m. The sign up poster is outside Wright Pavilion or contact the office (office@fccucc.org, 799-3361).



PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

For peace and peacemakers; for the end of US military involvement in Iraq; those in the military and their loved ones; for all who live without sufficient food, water, shelter, safety, love; for all who live with Alzheimer's and dementia and for those who love them.

Congratulations:

to George and Anne Ball on the March 22 birth of twin grandsons **Henry Robert Ball** and **Oliver Michael Ball**. Proud parents are David and Amy Ball of Westwood, Massachusetts.

Concerns:

Henrietta Lombard, **Dr. Joe Edgar**, **Margaret Fuller** recently hospitalized; **Gus Haeuser**, brother of Tex, preparing for open heart surgery on March 30; a 14-year-old girl undergoing surgery in Florida; Catherine Bickford's father, **Irving Bickford**, as he nears the end of his life; **Nancy Warren**, Ann Lockwood's mother, preparing for open heart surgery April 2nd, just days before her 84th birthday.

SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING Sunday - April 22

The Church Council calls a special meeting of the Congregation, immediately following sanctuary worship **Sunday, April 22**, to hear and to act on nominations for lifetime Elders. The Spiritual Life and Worship Team will introduce the nominees and make the motion.

Nancy MacLean, Church Moderator

No Answer

Over the past year, I've been writing for the United Church of Christ liturgy resource known as Worship Ways. In writing these liturgies, I begin as I would on any other Sunday. I begin by reading all five of the Lectionary texts for that particular day, but I usually do this while immersed within the liturgical season. The cadences of Lent are as familiar as my body's rhythms. (This is a strange side effect of being clergy.) Writing for Worship Ways, I have been required to think six months ahead so that I was writing a liturgy for Palm Sunday in October. Needless to say, this was very confusing.

This is also a really strange Sunday in the Christian calendar. Churches are trying to figure out how to tell the story on this particular Sunday because we want to be sure that everyone gets the whole story. It's not just that there's a parade and then Jesus rises. There is some important stuff that happens in the middle there – and even if you don't have my weird liturgical body rhythms, we want you to get a sense of that whole story. So, it's not just Palm Sunday. It's also Passion Sunday. We tell the whole story – or most of it so that there is a transition to prepare for this Holy Week leading to the awesome wonder of Easter.

Six months ago, when I read the passages for this particular Sunday, I was struck that I truly have no answer. I have no idea why this had to happen this way. I have no idea why awful tragedies continue to occur. I have no idea why it's so important to remember the brutality in the story of Jesus' death. I simply have no answer. So, that's where I started. It's this service that we'll share on April 1st at both 8:30 a.m. and at 10 a.m. – because no matter who you are or where you are on this journey through Lent, there really aren't any hard and fast answers. We are still waiting for the ending to reveal itself. We're still trying to figure out what it all means. We'll begin Holy Week in this way with space to sing familiar songs to strengthen our hearts and space to sit in silence to ponder the mysteries of life. We'll gather in worship to hear these sacred stories because no one really has an answer.

Elsa



STEEPLE LIGHTING

The steeple is lighted the week of **April 1** in loving memory of **Betsey Berry** by Scott Berry, and in loving memory of **John E. Chadbourne** from Nancy, Jane and John Chadbourne, Jr.

The steeple is lighted the week of **April 8** in remembrance of the 101st anniversary of the birth of her beloved husband **Frank E. Wright** by Maxine L. Wright.

The steeple is lighted the week of **April 22** in loving memory of **Paul Gray** by Beth DeTine and Sarah Gray.

HILLTOP GUILD MYSTERY RIDE

On **Thursday April 12** please be in the Wright Pavilion by **6:10 p.m.** From there, we will carpool to ?????? – our mystery ride destination. Dress is casual. After our journey we will return to church for dessert and a short meeting. Please join us - if you are not on our calling list, please call Joan Dennison (799-3193) by Monday April 9th so we can plan ride space for you. Thanks.

Marie Jordan
hilltop@fccucc.org

Family Potluck – A Celebration of Passover

The Family Potluck group will be hosting a celebration of Passover on **Sunday April 1** from **5:30-7:30 p.m.** in Wright Pavilion. Jeff and Deb Sandler will lead us in the family oriented tradition of the Seder feast.

Passover is a holiday that commemorates the time in history when the Jewish people were freed from slavery in the land of Egypt. The Jewish people were slaves, and they wanted to be free.

Passover is celebrated today in homes by having a Seder. Seder means order,

and we read the Passover story and eat the Seder meal in a special order.

All are invited to join this celebration. Children of all ages can participate in the Seder ritual, or eat dinner (provided) beforehand and then play in the gym or the nursery. Babysitting is provided for young children for just \$5 per family.

Look for a sign-up sheet in the Wright Pavilion. Contact Carol Zechman, zechmc@mainehealth.org with any questions.

Carol Zechman

Volunteers Needed – Elders Luncheon

The Spiritual Life & Worship Team is looking for volunteers to cook or to serve food at the annual **Elders Luncheon**, which will be held after the 10 a.m. service on **May 6th**. This is a fun as well as meaningful way to show appreciation to those who have

given so much to the Church. If interested, please leave your name and phone number with Jen Dealaman in the church office (office@fccucc.org or 799-3361) and we will contact you. Thanks!

The Men's Gathering

Our first of three once-a-month gatherings was a heart warming, rich experience with Mike Quinn as our leader.

Our next get together will be led by Jeff Sandler. Jeff and his wife Deb are widely known as "Mr. & Mrs. Fish", operating Fish Camp here in South Portland and other exotic places around the world (literary license)!

Some of us hadn't had a chance to know Jeff until last year's Men's

Retreat. What a treat. I hope you will join us for stimulating conversation and fun.

Our church has an extraordinarily interesting congregation but our business seldom affords us the opportunity to share conversation. But here it is! Just do it! Join us **Thursday April 26** from **7 to 9:00 p.m.** in our Davidson Lounge.

Jerry Onos

Youth Ministry Schedule

Sunday April 1, 4:30 p.m.:

CANCELLED

Saturday April 28, 8:00 a.m.:

Pilgrim Lodge Jumpstart Weekend

Saturday May 5, 5:00 p.m.:

LOCKIN !!!

Sunday May 20, 12:00 p.m.:

Seadogs Game with 1 p.m. game time

Sunday May 20, 4:00 p.m.:

End of Year Cookout

Jerry Reynolds
youth@fccucc.org

Summer is (Almost) Here! Beach Chair Theology is Back!

Beach Chair Theology will return this summer. This is our fifth summer – and our very own Scott Berry is eager to host again. Bring a Beach chair and a Bible. The coffee will be poured and Bibles will be opened at **8:00 a.m.** We'll be reading the Book of Jonah – chapter by chapter. Please also look for reading materials available around the church building to learn more about this whale of a tale.

- **Tuesday June 19:** Jonah 1
- **Tuesday July 10:** Jonah 2
- **Tuesday August 7:** Jonah 3
- **Tuesday August 14:** Jonah 4

If you have never joined us for this wonderful opportunity for study and

Leisurely Lectionary... with a Non-Canonical Twist

Everybody knows that there are four gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Not everyone knows that there are actually other gospels. The authorities of the Early Church decided that there should only be four gospels because there are four seasons and four directions – and well, it just makes sense. So, what wasn't included in the canon that we hold sacred?

This is the question that we have been asking in our weekly Bible Study on **Wednesday mornings at 10:30 a.m.** As we have asked many questions through Lent, we've wondered what other stories are out there – and how those stories might help us to understand our faith. After Easter, this small group has decided to read a small selection of non-canonical gospels together – including the Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Mary and the Gospel of Peter. These particular gospels have been chosen because they quarrel with each other and so we'll try to enter into the conversation in the heat of the

fellowship, then you just might to come for the view. Scott has a beautiful view near Two Lights overlooking the water. It's a treat to be there – with plenty of parking for all.

Directions to Scott's home: take 77 to Two Lights Road. Follow this to Mare's Hollow Lane (on your right where the paintings are sold). Make a sharp right. Scott's home is the first on the left. There is ample parking on the grass right before his home. Scott may even be out there to direct traffic.

Elsa A. Peters
elsa@fccucc.org

discussion. If you are interested in reading along with us, please find a copy of the gospels outside my office – or come on Wednesday mornings starting April 25. We will follow this reading calendar together.

Wednesday April 25 and May 2:

Gospel of Mary

-

Wednesday May 9 and May 16:

Gospel of Peter

-

Wednesday May 23 and May 30:

Gospel of Thomas

We will gather for one last time on June 6 to study the Lectionary (as usual) before we break for the summer. Please also note that on April 11 and April 18, we will explore Lectionary texts as well. If you're interested in joining in this conversation, but can't make it on Wednesday mornings, please also let me know.

Elsa A. Peters
elsa@fccucc.org



SENIOR ACTIVITIES

Thursday, April 5 - 1:00
SAGE meeting in the 3 & 4 grade classroom above the church office.

Thursday, April 12 - we will show the **movie, Big Miracle** in Davidson Lounge at **1:30**. The movie tells a story about stranded whales.

Thursday, April 19 - lunch at **SMCC at noon**. Cost is \$14 per person, which includes tax and gratuity. Please RSVP by April 10.

Thursday, April 26 - A busy day with **breakfast at I-Hop at 9:00** and **SAGE meeting at 1:00**.

Thursday, May 3 - birthday party in honor of those **90 years old and above**. We would love to have anyone younger attend the party to help us celebrate. The cost is \$10 per person for the catered luncheon for younger people. 90 year olds and their guest attend for free.

Easter Offering

Like the Christmas Offering, these gifts are administered by our Mission Outreach Team for direct assistance to the work of agencies and ministries. This year MO has chosen two ministries within our church - camperships for Pilgrim Lodge and SAGE - to receive your gifts. Amidst the fun of summer camps, Pilgrim Lodge's mission is to help young people and adults grow as Christians. Your offering will help to defray the cost for these campers. Our seniors keep busy with educational and

social activities all year long. All of the planning is coordinated by Seniors Advisory Group Extraordinaire (SAGE). Envelopes are included in the monthly sets or use the all-purpose offering envelope in the pew racks. The Mission & Outreach team thanks you for your support.

-Mission & Outreach Team
moteam@fccucc.org

Lenten Prayers for Hungry People Prayers and Actions to help you observe Lent in 2012

In the first 11 days of November our church community participated in Mission 1: a UCC event to raise awareness of food insecurity and famine in this country and around the world with discussion, letter writing and donations. As a congregation we also fed our neighbors here at home at Thanksgiving. Every week we help families through our own Emergency Pantry. The Mission and Outreach Team hopes this series based on weekly Lenten prayers and actions provided by Bread for the World organization will keep us ever mindful of the hunger that persists in our community and the blessings we receive in our continued service against it. This is the third and final installment - Week 6.

April 1 - 7

Prayer: O Christ, by your crucifixion and resurrection, you overcome death and all the powers of evil. Grant us faith to trust your promise of new life so that, living in your steadfast love, we may be extravagant in sharing with all those in need. Amen.

Action: The weeks just before and following Easter are an ideal time to explore how we can be agents of new life in God's world. The spring recess is also a good time to meet with our Representative when she returns to Maine and her constituents. Spring break may also be a good time to do good deeds for our neighbors - perhaps the kids can do some raking and spring clean up for an elder neighbor, or go shopping with you and pick up good items to donate to our Food Pantry, or maybe you can volunteer and serve the dinner meal April 7th at the Preble Street Soup Kitchen. For details email soupkitchen@fccucc.org.

- Mission & Outreach Team
moteam@fccucc.org



FAIR TRADE COFFEE

Future order dates are **June 3rd and 10th, 2012** and will be distributed on July 1.

Coffee orders will be taken after both the Chapel and 10 a.m. worship services (just look for the order table outside of worship or in Wright Pavilion). Payment in check or cash will need to be received on the day you order.

-Mission & Outreach Team
fairtrade@fccucc.org

RCAD

*Religious Coalition
Against Discrimination
For LGBT Equality and
Justice in Maine*

The Religious Coalition Against Discrimination and Integrity Maine invite your presence for "**A rabbi, a priest, and a minister...**" **How People of Faith Support Marriage Equality.** This will take place at the **Congregation Bet Ha'am, 81 Westbrook St., South Portland on Tuesday, April 3, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.** It will be a Panel with follow up Q & A of informal conversations and refreshments. For more information go to: www.rcadmaine.org.

SPRING RUMMAGE / GARAGE SALE

Hopefully items are starting to show up in Guptill Hall but we sure could use a few more to help make this sale our best! Pull out those clothes that you no longer will wear or those items that have been stored in the basement or garage for years that you no longer use. **The sale is on Saturday April 28th** (not April 29th as noted in prior Beacons) so you still have some time to get them to us.

Prudy
799-5705



CALLING ALL ARTISTS

The church is running low on our stock of birthday post cards and will need to order more soon. Are you interested having your art grace the cover of our new card order? If so, please contact elsa@fccucc.org.

Beacon Deadlines Changing to Fridays

As most members who have submitted articles to share with the congregation are aware, Beacon deadlines have historically fallen on a Monday. **Beginning in April Beacon deadlines will change to Fridays** to allow sufficient time to properly structure and format submissions, and distribute.

There are those who receive the hard-copy version of the Beacon - a friendly canary yellow packet that arrives in mailboxes almost bi-weekly. There are others who rely on the on-line version available on our website for catching up on the current events. Either way, we are happy to deliver the latest news and make it available to you!

Do you know that we mail over 300 hard copy packets to households almost every other week? Just looking at the last edition, with a length of 12 pages, that's 3600 pages mailed out - - actually, in terms of paper, that's 1800 double-sided pages mailed out! The process to get it from the church to your mailbox could come as a surprise as well. The system now set up allows articles to be submitted by a certain time. From there all articles are reformatted into a logical sequence to appear under the correct Team section. Once this phase is complete, there are adjustments to be made for a visually pleasing end product. From there, it's on to a few rounds of proofing sessions. Finally the edition goes "to print" getting copied in folded batches. From there, a lively group of church volunteers shows up at a specific time to assemble the batches into individual mailing packets. They then apply special labels that hold

each packet closed for mailing, and then apply individual address labels. Once assembled and labels on, for bulk mailing purposes, the packets are divided into batches by zip-code, bundled and logged onto a sheet for accounting before getting driven to and delivered at the Bulk Mailing facility in Scarborough. It's quite a process to make sure the hard copy Beacon arrives at your home, and it takes a team of productive and caring people to be sure this happens.

So, we hope this transition to Friday deadlines will be a smooth one, and well received. Knowing the time invested and the process involved in getting the news to you, we hope that you will adjust easily and try your best to submit articles by the end of each deadline Friday. **Beacon deadlines will be as follows, through this upcoming June:**

- **Friday April 20**
- **Friday May 4**
- **Friday May 18**
- **Friday June 1**
- **Friday June 15**

Please mark your calendars for these dates. Deadlines for the summer months will appear at a later time. As a reminder, articles should be emailed, as you would like them to appear, in Word (.doc) format to beacon@fccucc.org.

If you have any comments or questions please contact Jen Dealaman at office@fccucc.org Thank you.

THE NORTH CHURCH BEACON
Published by the First Congregational Church,
United Church of Christ
301 Cottage Road, South Portland, ME 04106

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Portland, ME
Permit No. 944

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Post Office
Time Sensitive Newsletter

Find us at: www.facebook.com/fccucc

God So Loved the World?

Lent is the season where Christians think about suffering.
But maybe you suffer enough. Maybe you need more love.
So what do you do with the violent metaphors in the end of Jesus' life?
Come listen to two pastors try to figure it out.

What metaphor works for you?

Sunday February 26 // Water (1 Peter 3:18-22)
Sunday March 4 // Body and Blood (Mark 14:12-26)
Sunday March 11 // Cup (Mark 14:32-52)
Sunday March 18 // Cross (John 3:14-21)
Sunday March 25 // Sword (Mark 15:16-32)
Sunday April 1 // Palms (Mark 11:1-11; 14:1-15:47)
Sunday April 8 // Empty Tomb (Mark 16:1-20)



Faith formation
opportunities available
for all ages. For more
information, visit:
www.fccucc.org.

