



Greetings this Holy season of Lent

I suggest reading Joel 2:12
Then recite this Celtic prayer: "God
Help Me. The Sea is so big and my

boat is so small"

This brief prayer speaks to the moment we find ourselves in as we begin this holy season of Lent.

Amidst the chaos and violence within our world, there is a sense of urgency for our prayer, for our dependence on God and for transformation.

The invitation is the same each year on Ash Wednesday: "Even now, says the Lord, return to me with your whole heart."

How can we return to God in this season of Lent with more intention and purpose?

There will come a time in our lives when we will truly have only two hours to live. How lovely will it be to have lived a life in which we have told everyone how loved they are, asked for forgiveness for all that we have atone, and forgive all those around us who yearn for forgiveness.

How lovely to greet that moment with no regrets, but with a sense of purpose, meaning, love, tenderness, and forgiveness. As we embody this season, we are asked to look at what is at the center;

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to strip things down to the core and to consider how we desire to move forward.

What relationships in your life need tending? Who do you need to forgive? And from whom do you need to seek forgiveness? What are you holding on to that is preventing you from being the person that God has called you to be?

May our prayer be to listen with openness, to see with eyes of clarity and to respond to the reassuring invitation to return to God this Easter.

Happy Easter and a joyous renewal of Faith!
Blessings,
Dennis



March

Happy Birthday to the following Church Members!

David Bruno 3/3
Jean Barker 3/4
John Gordon 3/5
Stacy Brites 3/8
Ralph Crouse 3/9
Patricia Perillo 3/11
Dana Silva 3/11
Dennis McGuire 3/15
James Trenske 3/19

Abigayle Trenske 3/20
Maria Rosa Arias 3/21
George Gardner 3/22
Harold Elwell 3/24
Kathryn St. George 3/24
Adrian Stephenson 3/24
Robert Mitchell 3/27
Miller Kane 3/27



GWIM FOOD BANK DONATIONS



Food Pantry
Donations Needed

**Peanut Butter & Jelly,
Canned Meats, Cold Cereal,
Mac & Cheese, Pasta & Pasta Sauce, Juice,
tuna, canned soups-stews-chili, canned fruits,
canned vegetables, beans (canned or dried),
rice pouches, etc.**

Other donations will be welcomed, but these will be the main focus. The food basket will be available each week in the Narthex.



Annual Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, March 23, 2024 11 am – 1 pm

First Congregational Church 222 West Main Street,
Waterbury

Rain or Shine! (games, crafts, snacks & giveaways)

Call 203-757-0331 for reservations!

Church Members: Donations of candy, plastic eggs (can be found at any dollar store) and snack items (juice, cookies, and chips) would be appreciated! Please drop off in the church office.

WISH LIST FOR SAFE HAVEN SHELTER

- ◆ Liquid Laundry detergent
- ◆ Canned Juice
- ◆ Dish Detergent
- ◆ Paper Towels
- ◆ Jars of Baby Food
- ◆ Toilet Paper
- ◆ Women's socks (new)
- ◆ Videos
- ◆ Nintendo Games
- ◆ Women's Underwear (new)
- ◆ Wash Cloths
- ◆ Gift Certificates
- ◆ Pillow Cases - Pillows
- ◆ Hair Brushes
- ◆ Diapers (large & ex-large)
- ◆ Cleaning Supplies
- ◆ Baby Cereal
- ◆ Napkins
- ◆ School Supplies
- ◆ Children's Socks (new)
- ◆ Large Bath towels
- ◆ Fitted twin sheets
- ◆ Children's Underwear (new)



Safe Haven currently provides the following bilingual (English/Spanish) services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault: up to 60 days of shelter for women and their children; individual and peer group counseling; 24 hour crisis hotlines for domestic violence and sexual assault; legal advocacy information and referral; community education for adults and children; and court based family violence victim advocacy. All information obtained through counseling remains confidential. They do not subscribe to Caller I. D. Please bring all your donations for Safe Haven on the third Sunday in March.



NOTES FROM OUR Director of Music



With Spring just around the corner, there will be several activities coming up that you will want to make note of:

The Easter Egg Hunt will be on Saturday, March 24th from 11:00am - 1:00pm. We have plenty of decorations for the event, what we do need is donations of candy, snacks, juice and of course we can always use your help. For more information please contact me through the office or see me after worship and I will gladly give you more details.

Open Mike Night is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, April 13 at 6:30pm in Clinton Hall. We welcome anyone who would like to take part. You can share anything from music to poetry and more with all of us!

“The Chosen” will resume on Wednesday, March 6, 2024. We will gather at 6:00pm and begin viewing at 6:30pm. The Chosen will meet every other Wednesday, we will continue pot-luck style so please bring a dish to share. Anyone is welcome , so bring a friend!

A new program brought to my attention by Gary Rosengrant “Kindness 101” by Steve Hartman. The show is built around lessons of kindness and character by people who have mastered both qualities. Many of the stories that are shared,

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are shared by children which makes this a wonderful opportunity for us to have discussion on each topic. The first viewing will be Tuesday, March 12 at 6:30pm. Please bring a dessert to share, coffee and tea will be provided. For more information please see me following worship for more information. All ages are welcome to attend!

Bell Choir continues to meet every other Thursday evening at 6:00pm in the Narthex. We are currently working on music for Easter Sunday. The ability to read music is helpful but not necessary. If you are interested please let us know or stop by one of our rehearsals!

Drum Circle, the drum circle has become a popular program here, led by Kristen Perham. The drums are provided and the program involves not only drumming but also discussion on various topics and great opportunities for meditation. The group has grown from 4-6 with another person joining us from the Hartford area. Upcoming dates will be posted soon!

Stewart Crouse
Director of Music



**SPRING
AHEAD**

**DAYLIGHT SAVINGS
TIME BEGINS!**

Daylight Savings Time will begin Sunday, March 10, 2024- at 2:00 a.m. Turn your clocks **AHEAD** one hour on Saturday evening March 9th.



Blooming of the Cross

This Easter Sunday, The Waterbury Baptist Ministries and First Congregational Church congregations will incorporate a folk ceremony called “the flowering of the Cross”. Members of both

churches are encouraged to bring fresh cut flowers and greenery to decorate a cross that has been raised in the church front yard. The flowering of the cross represents the transition from Good Friday to Easter, from meditation on Jesus’ death to joyful celebration of his resurrection. The ceremony transforms a barren cross, a reminder of Jesus’ death, into an Easter symbol, covered with fresh, living flowers. The cross serves not only as a emblem of Jesus’ resurrection, but as a sign of hope for our community.

Instructions:

All are encouraged to bring flowers between 9:00 am – 12:00 pm. Holy Saturday (March 30th). Encourage other in our community to bring flowers. Someone will be there if you need assistance. Later in the day, drive by to see the cross that symbolized the new life, hope, and beauty which Easter brings. Many of your families may want to get your picture made in front of the cross, Easter morning.



Holy Week and Easter Services



Come Worship With Us!

March 24, 2024 Palm Sunday

Palm Sunday Service

10 am – Sanctuary- First Congregational Church

March 28, 2024 Maundy Thursday

Maundy Thursday Communion Service

6:00 pm – Simple Meal Clinton Hall

7:00 PM Sanctuary - First Church

March 29, 2024

Good Friday – Church Closed

March 31, 2024 Easter Sunday

Easter Sunday Sunrise, 7:00 AM

Waterbury Baptist Ministries & First Church

Will be in the Chapel

Easter Sunday Service, 10:00 AM

First Congregational Church (Sanctuary)