

# *Spirit & Sparks*

*God is still Speaking, We are Responding, Come Journey with Us...*

MARCH 2017

The Congregational Church of Weston, UCC, 130 Newton Street, Weston, MA 02493  
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## PASTOR'S MARCH GREETING

Grace to you, and peace from God our Creator and the Lord Jesus Christ! Well, we don't greet one another with Happy Lent, as we enter one of the times in our year when we embrace a period of relinquishment. Beginning with Ash Wednesday, which falls this year on March 1<sup>st</sup> (and our service with our brothers and sisters in faith in the Spirit of Life Community at 7:30 pm), we enter into a time in which we remember who and whose we are. We remember our ancestors in faith and their fasts to respond to their faith. We remember Jesus' saving act on the cross and we pray that we might be mindful of this gift. We remember that we are God's children, who have a common origin and a common salvation. When we impose the ashes from last year's palms, we remember that we are dust, and that to dust we return. In honest confession of our sins, we move forward into Lent prayerful that we might be forgiven.

In the past several weeks, we have read a lot about what God requires from us. We read in Micah that we are "to act justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God." We read in Isaiah 58, "5 Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for people to humble themselves? Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed and for lying in

sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord? 6 "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? 7 Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?"

Our fasts this Lent, whether focused relinquishment of what we know gets between us and our discipleship, or our taking on of practices that glorify God, do not have to include the donning of sackcloth and certainly shouldn't be a single day in which we humble ourselves. We have the opportunity to pledge ourselves to the betterment of people's lives. It is what the Lord requires, and what best prepares us for the Grace we know in Easter. May it be so for us.

Yours in Christ,

*Pastor Lisa*

## THE PASTOR'S CORNER:

### CONFIRMATION CLASS

Snowed out of our February meeting, we look forward next to our overnight retreat with other classes in the MA Conference of the UCC. Our thanks to Paul Schendel who will join us as the male chaperone at Prindle Pond Conference Center in Charlton. The theme for the retreat this year is "Not That Kind of Christian: Re-articulating Faith for a New Generation." As the retreat organizers suggest, "the mainstream view of Christianity among young people is not very favorable. Many youth and young adults see Christians as hypocritical, judgmental, anti-gay, and out of touch with reality. At our retreats, we will address some of those stereotypes head on about what it means in our setting to be a follower of Jesus."

The cost of the retreat is \$135/person (which includes breakfast, lunch and snacks), with full payment due before we arrive. If families of confirmands will please bring or send a check for \$135 made out to MACUCC **by Thursday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>**, we will send them to the conference together. You will find a listing of "what to bring" on the webpage, which also includes some more information about the retreat.

<http://www.macucc.org/confirmation-info>

I would like to suggest an alternate date for us to gather in order to make up the February gathering. Please check your calendars and email Pastor Lisa with possibilities from among the following: Friday, March 24<sup>th</sup> from 6-8:00 at the

parsonage; Sunday, March 26<sup>th</sup> following worship; Friday evening, April 7<sup>th</sup>, from 6-8:00 at the parsonage. We will review together at the retreat what is "due" at that gathering.

### BIBLE STUDY

With the Bible, our sacred scripture, in front of us, each **Tuesday morning at 9:00** we gather for conversation. At present, we are reading *Hebrews*, though the focus of our conversation often is the concerns of the day or only a single chapter or verse. We begin with prayer for those in need, and we allow the time together to unfold as it will, with good humor and our deepest sensibilities guiding the hour or more. All are welcome! Join us!

### LENT BEGINS

#### ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1<sup>ST</sup>

We begin the season of Lent on Ash Wednesday, which is **March 1st** this year. Our worship service with the Spirit of Life Community will be at **7:30 pm** in the sanctuary, co-led by Pastor Lisa, Pastor Jean Marchant and Pastor Ron Hindelang. Maria Termini will be playing piano for the service, and Cathy Liddell will be providing two meditative pieces on the lute. The service reminds us of our common beginning and common destination in the Lord, as we begin the journey toward holy week together. The imposition of ashes will be offered during this service.

## THE PASTOR'S CORNER, *cont.*

### BOOK STUDY

Following our first gathering on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, we will meet three times to finish reading *The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World*, co-authored by Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama, as shared with Douglas Carlton Abrams during a five-day meeting in Dharamsala, India. Dividing the book into three further sections, we will read through page 201 for March 15<sup>th</sup> (**a change of date and page from the last email notice**); page 275 for March 22<sup>nd</sup>, and to finish the book for April 5<sup>th</sup>. That allows for 50 – 75 pages a week—not too taxing for anyone, I hope. Our reading is meant to be a treat for us, not a burden!

In a daily meditation I receive, Isabel Allende's words this week share a similar sensibility to what we are learning from the archbishop and the Dalai Lama. "I have lived with passion and in a hurry, trying to accomplish too many things. I never had time to think about my beliefs until my 28-year-old daughter Paula fell ill. She was in a coma for a year and I took care of her at home, until she died in my arms in December of 1992. Paralyzed and silent in her bed, my daughter Paula taught me a lesson that is now my mantra: You only have what you give... The pain of losing my child was a cleansing experience. I had to throw overboard all excess baggage and keep only what is essential. Because of Paula, I don't cling to anything anymore. Now I like to give much more than to receive. I am happier when I love than when I am loved. I

adore my husband, my son, my grandchildren, my mother, my dog, and frankly I don't know if they even like me. But who cares? Loving them is my joy. Give, give, give—what is the point of having experience, knowledge or talent if I don't give it away? Of having stories if I don't tell them to others? Of having wealth if I don't share it? I don't intend to be cremated with any of it! It is in giving that I connect with others, with the world and with the divine. It is in giving that I feel the spirit of my daughter inside me, like a soft presence." (Isabel Allende, 1942 -)

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

#### Coming Up in Our Benefit Concert Series

Please be sure to share news of our concert series with your friends! Word is getting out about the caliber of performers coming to our church, and we are excited to have the concerts spotlighted by the Weston Media Center, who will produce them for local access cable TV. Raising funds for important social justice work while enjoying fine entertainment, inviting our neighbors into our sacred space make this series a win-win-win experience we want to share!

**Saturday, March 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:00** will bring the duo of Nathan Gourley and Laura Fedderson, two of America's most highly regarded young players of traditional Irish music. Their playing is steeped in lifelong study of the Irish tradition, and is at the

## THE PASTOR'S CORNER, *cont.*

same time colored by their American roots. The pair have developed a unique style of twin fiddling, sometimes playing in taut unison, sometimes exploring chordal harmonies and rhythmic and melodic variations. Nathan adds tastefully intricate chords and driving rhythm on guitar. Proceeds from this evening's concert will benefit the American Civil Liberties Union, a cause the musicians are eager to support in every way they can.



On **Saturday, April 29<sup>th</sup> at 4:00** we welcome Hans Araki and Owen Marshall sharing tunes and songs in the Celtic and Breton tradition. You can view their duo as part of a four-piece group in the following clip:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RwHNw6D-rBQ>.

Multi-instrumentalist Owen Marshall is one of the most highly sought-after accompanist in the United States. With his unique sense of harmony and rhythm, he has traveled and performed all over the world with many of the top acts in traditional music. A demanding schedule

doesn't interfere with his pursuit of new and innovative sounds as a bedrock accompanist with a style that never grows stale. Once called "a quintessential world-music musician," award-winning singer and flute player Hans Araki has been a prominent figure in the Irish music community in North America and beyond for more than 2 decades. In that time he has released 11 albums, played countless festival stages, toured internationally, and collaborated with a number of well-respected musicians within and outside of the Celtic music genre. A portion of the proceeds from this concert will benefit the Africa Exchange Project, sponsored by the Plymouth Church, Framingham. You may read about their clean water project in Tanzania and continuing work in the community of Pommerini on the following webpage:

<http://www.africaexchangeproject.org>.



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## **CRADLES TO CRAYONS OUTREACH MARCH 5, 1:30 - 3:30 pm.**

We are excited to return to work at the Cradles to Crayons warehouse in Brighton on Sunday, March 5th, leaving CCW at about 12:45 (after a brown bag lunch). This is an intergenerational opportunity for adults and children aged 8 and above.

Cradles to Crayons also asks participating groups to donate clothing and will accept a wide range of new and gently-used goods that are appropriate for use by children ages newborn to 12. If you cannot join us on March 5th, but would like to donate clothing, please bring your donation to church on or before that date. For more information on donations, go to <https://cradlestocrayons.app.box.com/v/donation-guidelines>.

If you haven't filled out permission forms yet, please email **Lisa von Lichtenberg** ASAP at [Planetnianow@gmail.com](mailto:Planetnianow@gmail.com) so we can coordinate transportation.

We will be back at CCW for pickup at about 4:00pm. Volunteer drivers needed please!



## **ART EXHIBITION**

Our very own and multi-talented Sharon Kuhn is exhibiting her acrylic paintings at the Congregational Church. Not only is Sharon a champion dancer, popular music instructor and beloved childcare teacher, but she is also a budding, talented artist. Take a moment to enjoy Sharon's work and join us for an artist reception on Sunday, March 12 after worship service. If you can bring a snack treat to share at the reception, please email Yvonne Posa at [ycposa@gmail.com](mailto:ycposa@gmail.com).



## **Pastor Parish Relationship Committee (PPRC)**

### ***WE NEED YOUR HELP!***

Thank you to those who filled out the Worship surveys. We got some very thoughtful responses, BUT WE ARE MISSING YOURS. Rebecca can send you Worship if you misplaced yours.

Remember that Lisa has asked for the members of the congregation to evaluate her performance in four sections: Worship, Leadership, Relationship, and Education. We are asking you to fill out a brief 5-6 question survey each month, February through May.

Rebecca has made the surveys available to you by email, in paper form, or with Survey Monkey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/X9FGCF7>

Please participate. Lisa wants your candid comments and suggestions. She has asked you to sign the form so she can talk with you personally about your ideas.

Thank you for your help.

Tom Nicholson  
Chair PPRC



**Daylight Savings Ends  
Sunday, March 12  
Set your clock ahead 1 hour**



## 2017 CCW Leadership

### Officers

Pastor*	Lisa Durkee
Moderator*	Chris Paquin
Assistant Moderator	<i>To be nominated in moderator's last year of service</i>
Clerk*	Susan Upham
Treasurer*	Alex von Lichtenberg
Assistant Treasurer Deposits	Susan Banghart
Assistant Treasurer Investments	Jeff Heuer
Assistant Clerk	<i>As needed: will rotate among meeting attendees</i>

### Church Council (\* = member of the Church Council)

#### Council's Stewards

Faith Formation*	TBD
Spiritual Life*	Kristen Reeder (Deacon)
Outreach*	Ann Marie Kreft
Hospitality*	Chris Paquin (Moderator)
Support*	Paul Schendel

### Ministries

#### *Faith Formation*

Faith Discovery Advisor\*  
Safe Church Chair  
Senior High School Advisors  
Middle School Advisors  
Confirmation Class Advisor

#### *Spiritual Life*

3 <sup>rd</sup> year Deacons*	Ruthanne Brown & Kristen Reeder
2nd year Deacon	Elaine Lai Fulton & Vin Shelton
1 <sup>st</sup> year Deacons	Betsy Bailey & TBD
Worship & Arts Committee Chair	
Exhibits Curator	Yvonne Posa
Music Sub-Committee	Jessica Schendel & Paul Schendel

#### *Social Responsibility & Outreach*

Outreach Chair*	Jessica Schendel
Environmental Action Group	Paul Schendel
Countryside Playschool Liaison	Lisa Durkee

#### *Hospitality & Growth*

Hospitality Chair*	<i>To be handled on Ad Hoc basis UFN</i>
Publicity Chair*	
Website	

***Stewardship & Support***

Finance Chair*	Alex von Lichtenberg with Paul Reeder’s assistance
Personnel & Pastor/Parish Chair	Tom Nicholson
Buildings & Grounds*	Michael Higgins (Church) Gerry Brunk (Parsonage)
Stewardship Campaign Chair	Alex von Lichtenberg
Planned Giving Campaign Chairs	Mary Cross & Jack Salerno

***Serving our Wider Church***

Committee on Ministerial Standing	Mary Cross
Environmental Task Force	Paul Schendel
MBA Nominating Committee	Elaine Lai Fulton



**MARCH 'MINDERS**

	3/5	3/12	3/19	3/26
<b>Greeters/Ushers</b>	Ann Marie Kreft	Paul and Kristen Reeder	<i>open</i>	<i>open</i>
<b>Coffee Hour Host</b>	von Lichtenberg	Posa	<i>open</i>	Schendel
<b>Flowers*</b>	Shelton	Brown	Earle	Reeder
<b>Light Bearer</b>	Griffin T.	Skyar B.	Kayla B.	Julie W.

\* Altar Flower arrangements cost \$55 when the church office orders through Leiby’s or you may provide your own.



**FAITH COMMUNITY NEWS**

*Birthdays*

March 7	Paul Schendel	March 22	Michael Brown
March 16	Ariana Gunderson	March 22	Jack Bull



*Anniversary* - March 7 - Vin and Becky Shelton

Whose birthday are we missing? Would you like to share an anniversary? Please let us know in the church office at 781-899-5417 or [rparkhillccw@comcast.net](mailto:rparkhillccw@comcast.net)



# Faith Discovery for Children



## MARCH



### Family Lent Activity - Lent in a Bag!

It's hard for us always-busy folk to take time to reflect, on anything really, but certainly on matters pertaining to our souls. This simple bag will help. It contains objects that can serve either for your own focus or as conversation starters as a family, perhaps during a meal. There is also a sheet explaining each object, suggesting a Bible reading and some conversation-starting questions. Pick one up! The presentation is humble, the possibilities are rich.

### Workshop Rotation starts March 19

Our theme this year is Jesus the Story-Teller. Jesus' stories are called Parables, and we will delve into 3 of them. As usual, our Workshop Rotation will feed the worship service led by the children on Children's Sunday. This will

include the presentation of Puppet Parables. So hold these dates:

March 19

March 26

April 2

The children will absolutely NOT want to miss this!

**FAITH DISCOVERY: It's THE place to be on Sunday morning!! BRING YOUR FRIENDS!!**

Outreach and Stewardship Opportunities for Children in MARCH:

Bring an offering on Sunday to help Pets for Vets (Veterans).

Help clean up your Classroom after class.

If you are 8 years old or older join the group going to Cradles to Crayons on March 5. (see more information elsewhere in this edition of Spirit and Spark)

