



The Trumpet

MARCH 2025

A publication of the East Woodstock Congregational Church, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



This week opens a season of self-reflection and renewal. For six and one half weeks, Christians around the world will prepare themselves spiritually for the celebration of their highest Holy Day: Easter. Many of them will make personal sacrifices, focusing through these long days on the sacrifices Jesus made as he set his face toward Jerusalem.

Different Christian denominations choose to give something up for Lent. Perhaps, instead, try to add something: more time in prayer, promises to read scripture daily, setting aside time each day to journal, reading through a book that you might find spiritually uplifting, or taking extra time to make calls or visits to those in need of time with a friend.

We can be grateful for the spiritual practices of our faith tradition, including this Lenten call to spiritual discipline that deepens our awareness of the sacrifices Jesus made.


No matter what your spiritual pathway is, or how you explore and deepen connections to your Sacred, take time to assess your spiritual health. Discover ways that the entrapments of this world burden you – whether in the ongoing and seemingly insatiable pursuit of baubles that attract, or in the simple fact that such baubles, once acquired, only serve to distract us from our higher callings.

Open yourself up to the ancient rituals that invite us to turn away from things that distract us from, or learn anew spiritual disciplines that focus us on, spiritual awakening.

During this season of Lent, may you be encouraged to lighten your load if it be overlaid with excesses that distract; may you be invited into times of spiritual wholeness that come when we are less distracted; and may the Eastertide find you ready to celebrate once again the joy of life overcoming death. May you deepen your relationship with your Sacred on this, your journey Into the Mystic.


from Chris Gabriel, UCC
Witness for Justice Ministry

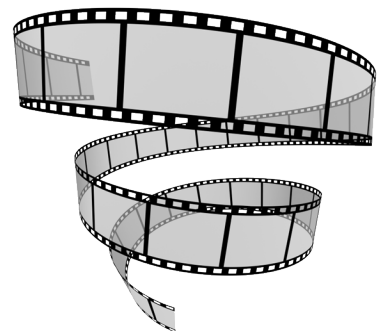
LENTEN LEARNING SERIES BEGINS MARCH 9TH

To aid you in your Lenten journey, we are offering a Lenten Series program during the Sundays of Lent (March 9, 16, 23, 30, April 6, 13) following the worship service. It is *24 Hours that Changed the World* about the last 24 hours in Jesus's life. The guide for the series is Reverend Adam Hamilton, Senior Pastor of the 25,000-member United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kansas, the largest United Methodist congregation in the world. We will watch a 10-minute segment of the DVD each week and then discuss questions related to the segment. There will be a signup sheet in Fellowship Hall if you would like to join the Lenten Series. If you cannot commit to joining the group every Sunday, that is okay. Come to as many as you can. Each segment is self-contained. 

POTLUCK FILM SERIES GROWING IN POPULARITY

In February and March, over 25 people stayed following the service to enjoy a lunch potluck and discussion with *Ground Hog Day* and *Sister Act*. Both films, with comedic turns, revealed messages of love, redemption, and forgiveness. Pastor Gary led the open discussions where attendees shared their laughter and perspectives.

The next film is and will be held on Sunday, May 4th, following the service. There will be a sign up sheet in Fellowship Hall for attendees and potluck choices. Any questions, please feel free to contact Pastor Gary directly. 





Many people at this time of year make New Year's resolutions. Among the most popular are to exercise, eat healthier, and find a better job.

Sound familiar? Have you made some of these or other resolutions too many times over the past years with no real progress or change in your life? If so, join the crowd. Change is always hard.

A joke about this is "How many Congregationalists does it take to change a light bulb?" The answer is all of them. One to appoint a study committee on whether to change the light bulb, the entire congregation to vote to approve the study committee's recommendation to change the light bulb, the Trustees to appoint someone physically to change the light bulb, and the rest of the membership to talk about the good old days with the old light bulb.

Churches, like the people who compose them, don't like change. Another joke along these lines is "The Seven Last Words of the Church: We've Never Done It That Way Before." The above joke is toxic for a church that needs to grow and change.

New Year's resolutions rarely work. The reason they don't is because of the wrong attitude. Instead of thinking that we are the ones who must be in charge of the changes, why don't we instead rely on God to do something new in our life and in our church's life? Yes, this is different, not choosing something definite. Yes, this is unpredictable, not always under our control. Yes, this is scary, not knowing what is going to happen. But if we enter this year expecting that

God will do something new for us and our church, then it will certainly be exciting.

Isaiah 43:18-19 says, "Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."

The United Church of Christ has adopted as one of its slogans "God Is Still Speaking." But "God is still doing" also. What new things do you suppose God will do among us? What "way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert" will God lead us through? It can be very exciting to imagine. The Christian life is never boring. Church should never be wearying. Abiding with God is always new and stimulating, never tedious and predictable.

Is your life going the way you want, the way you had hoped? Do you feel fulfilled? Is the church everything you expect it to be? If the answer to these questions is "No," then allow God to lead you in this New Year so that change can take place.

For those of you who have not joined our worship services for a while, make the New Year's resolution to return. The church misses you. The church wants you. The church needs you. The church is missing something very important when you are not present in worship. It misses you. You are part of the church. Just as a machine does not work as it should if it has pieces missing, so the church also doesn't work as it should when all of us are not gathered together, either in our worship or in our work.

For those of you who are regular attenders in worship, good for you! God honors that. But you can become more involved, and thereby become more fulfilled in your life. I am meeting with the membership to talk to you about the church and the dreams you have for this church. If you have ideas about what ministries, missions, and programs you would like for the church to be doing, please let me know. The interim time between the leaving of a settled pastor and the calling of a new one is not a time to just sit back and carry on with business as usual. I am not here just to plug the hole between settled pastors. A lot needs to be done during this interim time before an informed decision can be made by the congregation to call a new suitable settled pastor.

Our Annual Meeting confirmed the Transition Team 2, responsible for gathering data and facilitating conversation in the congregation around the following questions: Who are we? Who is our neighbor? Who is God calling us to be? Answers to these questions are collected in preparation for the writing of a Church Profile, a document that usually spans between 35 and 50 pages, necessary to attract ministerial candidates for the position of Settled Pastor. The Search and Call Committee will not begin their work until autumn and will have the duty of evaluating Ministerial Profiles as they are received by the church and the interviewing of candidates for the position of Settled Pastor.

For people of faith, New Year's resolutions begin with Christ's working

in our life. He has already set us free from the power of sin and the fear of death. We are blessed with God's love, peace, and hope. Because of that, we are able to find meaning and fulfillment in our lives, which in turn helps to bless the lives of others.

So, make sure to include in your resolutions taking steps to grow in your faith. Attend worship services. Attend Membership classes. Attend Bible Study. Let your resolutions be God-centered.

Greetings and God's Richest Blessings for 2025,
Pastor Gary

Come, my Light,
and illumine my darkness.
Come, my Life,
and revive me from death.
Come, my Physician,
and heal my wounds.
Come, Flame of divine love,
and burn up the thorns of my sins,
kindling my heart
with the flame of thy love.

Dimitrii of Rostov

From the Beginning of Time

Jesus,
you have known us from the beginning of time,
you have known us in the depths of our dreams and
in the darkness of our shame,
you know us as your beloved.

Help us to own that core identity more and more in this season
of repentance and mercy.
Give us the rock-solid assurance of your unwavering faith in us
as we seek the same in you.

Amen.

Author Unknown

Invite Us Deeper

Almighty and ever living God,
you invite us deeper into your world,
your people, your Lent.
May this time be one of outward focus;
seeking you in those we often ignore.
Help us live a Lent focused on freedom,
generosity, and encounter.
Give us hearts hungry to serve you
and those who need what we have to give.

Author Unknown



The following are the scripture readings for the month of March: *You are invited to read them as part of your daily devotions and as preparation for worship.*

Sunday, March 9

First Sunday in Lent

Deuteronomy 26:1-11 Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16
Romans 10:8b-13 Luke 4:1-13

Sunday, March 16

Second Sunday in Lent

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18 Psalm 27
Philippians 3:17—4:1 Luke 13:31-35
or Luke 9:28-36

Sunday, March 23

Third Sunday in Lent

Isaiah 55:1-9 Psalm 63:1-8
1 Corinthians 10:1-13 Luke 13:1-9

Sunday, March 30

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Joshua 5:9-12 Psalm 32
2 Corinthians 5:16-21, Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

worship & prayer

Continuing to pray for ...

- The family of Wendy Lurvey, who passed away in late December
- Christine Gambardella, receiving chemotherapy for a recent cancer diagnosis
- The family of Seth Weaver, who passed away in early February... Mary and Kent, Jessica, and their extended families
- Jasmin Floyd, in the recent loss of her mother RoJeanne Doege
- Pam Brown, prayers for upcoming surgery and recovery
- Our church community as we continue to move forward in this transition

God hears our prayers and surrounds those we pray for with comfort, strength, and compassion in difficult times.



DEVELOPING A WORSHIP DESIGN TEAM


Recently, The Reverends Kevin Downer (1st Church, Woodstock, UCC) and Pamela Briddle (Putnam Congregational UCC) held a workshop on worship design that augments and enriches worship space.

What is worship design? Worship design recognizes worship is more meaningful when it is “experienced” through all of the senses, and more impactful when the congregation is engaged and participatory rather than passive ‘observers’.

The Worship Design team welcomes **everyone** and encourages the pastoral staff (pastor, deacons, altar guild), church musicians, creative folks, tech and media creators, youth representatives, teachers to collaborate and bring ideas that encourage spiritual growth and vision that may even attract new attendees!

A workshop on worship design is in the planning stages; **want to join?** Please let Mary in the office know, via phone/email.


LENTEN DESERT AND GARDEN

As we begin Lent, an experiential “altarscape” will be visible and growing in the chancel area. Interested? Questions, please contact Dorrie Scranton who is coordinating this creative effort. Information will also be provided in the Bulletin for each successive Sunday. 

ANNUAL MEETING BRINGS WARM FELLOWSHIP, BREAKFAST AND PLANS FOR EWCC'S FUTURE

A full house for breakfast church, opened our hearts, bellies, and minds for our Annual Meeting on January 26. Members, friends, and our youth attended and participated in engaging and meaningful discussion about EWCC's pastoral transition and future.

Discussion also concerned our financial health, which for the coming year will be a bit tighter. Several confident elder members stated that historically, “we have been here before” and will get through. Kudos to Society and the hard work of Treasurer DeEtta Spalding for creating a thoughtful, realistic, and balanced budget.

Our Church's **TRANSITION 2 COMMITTEE**, charged with writing our Church Profile, started work Sunday February 23. Members: Pam Brown, Kaylyn Converse, Peter Green, Lynn Hescheles, Phil Parizeau, Bob Rath, Anthony Reed, Jess Reed, Tom Stokes and Jessica Weaver-Boose formed into 3 different teams in order to complete the Profile. Pastor Gary shared insights he has gained through his individual meetings with over 50 people from the congregation. If you have not talked with Pastor Gary yet please take the time to do so. Please be ready to talk with Team members as they gather information. The Teams will work on their respective assignments and the Committee will reconvene on April 6. Our plan is to have the East Woodstock Congregational Church Profile completed by June 1 for distribution to the Congregation. We will have a brief forum for questions on the Profile following church on June 8 and a Congregational Vote on the Profile Sunday June 15. 

SOCIETY has outlined a plan for our heating budget and operations during this winter season.

Keeping our church buildings warm and welcoming while managing our budget takes the help of all of us. The Society Committee has several programs in place to attempt to manage our oil usage each winter.

Nest programmable thermostats control our four oil-fired furnaces, one each for the Sanctuary, Chapel, Christian Education Building, and Fellowship Hall/Brick School Building. The Nest thermostats are set to raise the heat to 67° as needed for Worship on Sunday morning, the Chapel for Pastor Gary and Mary during the weekdays, Bell Choir practice on Thursdays, etc. The Nest thermostats can easily be increased by rotating the outside bezel to the desired temp. The thermostats are also programmed to set back to 50° after a planned use and several times daily. Considering the size of our Sanctuary, we attempt to minimize the heating. Thank you to our Choir for practicing in the Chapel during the winter and the Bell Choir for minimizing their heating time.

Members can assist us in several ways:

- Please dress warmly when you attend church; 67° is not toasty!
- On Sunday mornings, please enter the Sanctuary using the east Narthex door.

- For a regular meeting, please increase the Nest thermostat manually, and please return to 50° when finished.
- For a planned event, please contact our Office Manager, Mary Oliver, to pre-set the thermostat. For example, a luncheon or movie, and please return 50° when finished.
- Ceiling fans should be on at all times, except during worship service; this forces the hot air down in the cold months and improves air movement in the warm months.

We are all aware of how expensive fuel and electricity is for us all. Our church is no exception. Thanks for cooperating to keep our church warm and welcoming and for helping us stay on a tight budget. ☞

*Contributions from
Bob Rath, Transition 2 Committee
Glen Lessig, Society*

LADIES BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

Join us for Physical Fitness & You on Wednesday, March 19th with Bri Fuda, personal trainer. Donna Baldyga & Marilyn Rath will host, Lucy Wong will share the Reflection. Everyone is welcome. We begin our program at 1:30PM. *Note, our April meeting is now 4/12/25.

On December 18, 2024, about 20 women and Pastor Gary gathered in Fellowship Hall for the LBS annual Christmas Party. Marilyn Rath, Carrie Walker, and Kerstin Forrester hosted this fun event. We began with a prayer led by Pastor Gary and then a very quick update on our Holly Fair results – we had a net profit of \$10,726.29! We will set this aside to help pay for a much-needed upgrade to our fire/smoke detection system. Following this brief update, we played a round of Christmas Trivia and a couple of games of Bingo. Then Marilyn accompanied us on her accordion as we sang several Christmas carols. We then had time to socialize as we enjoyed deviled eggs, cake, cookies and mulled cider. It was a lovely start to our Christmas celebrations. We provided Pastor Gary with about 15 gift cards from supermarkets or gas stations which he can use at his discretion to help community members in need. ☞

MEN'S BREAKFAST

Irish it was about a week earlier so we could serve green food. . . March men's breakfast will be on the 23rd. Let's get together and tell good stories about St Pat's days in the past, and maybe start talking up the men's choir for Palm Sunday. ☞

Windsor White

WOMEN'S RETREAT

As we are working and learning about the transition process and thinking about what we have done in the past, why we have done it and what we value so much that we want to continue to do in the future, we also think about the women's retreat. Although it didn't time out right for this spring, we have some ideas for later in the fall. Stay tuned for more info over the summer and early fall! ☞

Amy Hiller-White

OUTREACH

Never too early for Easter Baskets (buckets)! Outreach continues its mission for the Domestic Violence Shelter and Covenant to Care.



John Carlson, who passed away January 3rd. John was an integral part of our community and a longtime volunteer at Muddy Brook Fire Co.

Alice Compagnone, who passed away on January 28th. "Allie" was a world traveler who spent her final years enjoying family here in the area.

Rojeanne Doege, who passed away on February 28. Deeply spiritual, Roseanne's presence will be sorely missed.

May their memory be a blessing to all. ☞

thank you...

...To all of the bakers and providers of nutritious goodies for our annual meeting and Breakfast Church in January, and the helpers who did the amazing cleanup!

...Pastor Gary, who provided a thorough and considered guide to Congregationalism and the UCC; and to Lynn Hescheles, Cris Waldron, and Jessica Weaver Boose who enhanced lunches for our new member classes.

...Peter Green, who has endeavored to invisibly make our indoor spaces and sanctuary visibly impactful with his painting expertise these last few months!

...Soupmakers, Kerstin Forrester, Cris Waldron, and Karen Ryker making sure we had enough to send out something nourishing to those needing warmth for body and soul.


...Calvin Neely, Seth Spalding, Dennis Kelly and all of the other helpful folks who have kept up with the snow and ice and helped keep us all safe.

...Val Law and Bob Rath and the many members of the care team that have surrounded Rojeanne and Jasmin with love, knowledge, comfort, and compassion.

“CONGO-SATIONS” LEAD TO REVEALING PROGRESSIVE CHURCH HISTORY

During January and February, six candidates for membership, members, and friends came together for a lunchtime roundtable with guidance and discussion with Pastor Gary on the history of Christianity, the United Church of Christ, and Congregationalism. Initially intended for three sessions, the discussions stretched into several more with additional information and interest of attendees.

Pastor Gary's outline included the eye-opening statement that, “Congregationalism refers more to the means of church government than to any theological perspective. It finds its basis in the scriptural principle that local believers in Christ are free to associate in individually gathered churches. This principle provided not only a powerful unifying religious principle for Congregationalists, but also for American democratic institutions. Pretty radical, those Pilgrims.

The group also learned the complicated history of the Woodstock Congregational churches, including several squabbles that finally were settled in 1830 when “the northern parish” church decided to build, and the current building was erected in 1832. 

SOME SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF OUR CHURCH

- **1624**, founded the first public schools in the American colonies in Plymouth, Massachusetts, out of a desire that everyone should be able to read the Bible
- **1636**, founded the first institution of higher learning in the colonies, Harvard College
- **1700**, became the first mainline denomination in the colonies to take a stand against slavery
- **1785**, became the first mainline Protestant denomination to ordain an African-American to the Christian ministry, Lemuel Haynes
- **1833**, founded the first institution of higher learning to open its doors to women, Oberlin College in Ohio
- **1839-1841**, worked to free the African captives who were illegally brought to the United States on the ship called *La Amistad*
- **1840**, became the first united church in American history when the German Lutheran and German Reformed denominations merged to form the Evangelical [Protestant] Synod, having been separated for three centuries
- **1853**, ordained Antoinette Brown, the first woman ordained to ministry in the modern era
- **1957**, merged the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church to form the United Church of Christ, the first time in history that two major denominations comprised primarily of two different ethnic groups (English and German) came together as one church
- **1963**, crafted powerful General Synod civil rights resolutions
- **1972**, ordained the first openly gay person into the Christian ministry, Bill Johnson, and in 1977, ordained the first openly lesbian minister, Anne Holmes
- **1985**, voted to become “Open and Affirming” to gay and lesbian persons, the first mainline denomination to do so, welcoming their gifts into the ministry of the church, following the lead of the Massachusetts Conference of the UCC, which voted to become “Open and Affirming” a year earlier
- **2005**, voted to accept gay and lesbian marriages, the first mainline denomination to do so



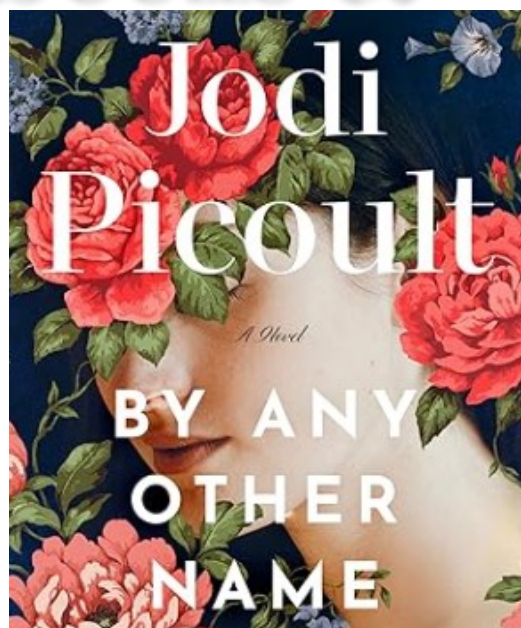
New members who joined on March 2nd: Stacy Vogt, Windsor White, Linda Kaplan, Lucy Bousquet, Mary Oliver, and Jessica Weaver Boose.

March

SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

Birthdays: Jaxson W., March 7 Emmitt P., March 10 Eva N-W, March 13 Owen P., March 24 Callie N-W., March 26 Gavin B., March 30 Gavin W., March 30						1
2 Communion Worship 10AM New Members Movie/Potluck	3 Community Kitchen	4 Choir 7PM	5 Bible Study 10:30AM Al-Anon, 7:30PM	6 Bells 7PM	7 Food Fair 9AM	8
9 Worship 10AM Confirmation Class, 11:30AM EWCB 6:30PM	10 Outreach, 6PM	11 Choir 7PM	12 Bible Study 10:30AM Al-Anon, 7:30PM	13 Bells 7PM	14 Mom's Club 9:30AM	15 "O'Bunko" 6:30PM
16 Worship 10AM Confirmation Class, 11:30AM EWCB 6:30PM	17 Society 7PM Dartball 7PM	18 Choir 7PM	19 Bible Study 10:30AM LBS, 1:30PM Al-Anon, 7:30PM	20 Bells 7PM	21	22
23 Men's Breakfast 8AM Worship 10AM Confirmation Class, 11:30AM Event 10-5 (FH) EWCB 6:30PM	24	25 Choir 7PM Council 7PM	26 Bible Study 10:30AM Al-Anon, 7:30PM	27 Bells 7PM	28	29
30 Worship 10AM Confirmation Class, 11:30AM EWCB 6:30PM	31 Book Discussion 7PM	Reminders: 3/30 Easter Baskets/Buckets Holy Week: 4/13 Palm Sunday 4/17 Maundy Thursday 4/18 Good Friday 4/20 Easter Sunrise behind Woodstock Academy 4/20 Easter Service, 10AM Men's Chorus 4/8, 7PM				

books &




"You'll fall in love with Emilia Bassano, the unforgettable heroine based on a real woman that Picoult brings vividly to life in her brilliantly researched new novel."—Kristin Hannah, author of *The Women*

Young playwright Melina Green has just written a new work inspired by the life of her Elizabethan ancestor Emilia Bassano. But seeing it performed is unlikely, in a theater world where the playing field isn't level for women. As Melina wonders if she dares risk failure again, her best friend takes the decision out of her hands and submits the play to a festival under a male pseudonym.

In 1581, young Emilia Bassano is a ward of English aristocrats. Her lessons on languages, history, and writing have endowed her with a sharp wit and a gift for storytelling, but like most women of her day, she is allowed no voice of her own. Forced to become a mistress to the Lord Chamberlain, who oversees all theatre productions in England, Emilia sees firsthand how the words of playwrights can move an audience. She begins to form a plan to secretly bring a play of her own to the stage—by paying an actor named William Shakespeare to front her work.

Told in intertwining timelines, *By Any Other Name*, a sweeping tale of ambition, courage, and desire centers two women who are determined to create something beautiful despite the prejudices they face. Should a writer do whatever it takes to see her story live on . . . no matter the cost? This remarkable novel, rooted in primary historical

sources, ensures the name Emilia Bassano will no longer be forgotten.

By Any Other Name will be discussed at the next book group on Monday, March 31 at 7PM. May Library will have copies available. We hope to read *The Golden Doves* by Martha Hall Kelly in April. In May, she will be the guest speaker for Quiet Corner Reads. More info TBD to confirm. 


Anne Sorensen

Making its way around the pews has been a shiny red hardcover by Sarah Jo Burke: *Don't Think It Hasn't Been Fun: The Story of the Burke Family Singers*. Now, even better, if you don't have time to do a bit of reading, it's been released on Audible and features original music by the Burke Family Singers and read by Sarah Jo! Sarah Jo, the youngest Burke girl, has filled *Don't Think It Hasn't Been Fun* with idyllic scenes of youth and music and unforgettable characters. She narrates the story with warmth and good humor. The audiobook is illustrated with actual recordings of the Burke Family singing - three dozen musical samplings interspersed throughout the narration prove that this family was indeed a musical delight as well as a personality delight.

What is the chance that ten children from a staunchly Irish-Catholic family could produce an excellent assortment of altos, sopranos, tenors and basses - on pitch, in time, and with enough character and charisma to fill Carnegie Hall, and win the hearts of a community of colorful characters along the way? In Rhode Island ten talented children and two devoted parents sang their way out of a working-class neighborhood and onto some of the biggest entertainment venues of the 1960's.

Led by their classically trained father Walter and his trusty pitchpipe, their repertoire--delivered mostly a cappella--consisted of the classical art songs of Europe, liturgical and American folk music. Their first television appearance--Christmas Carols by the Burke Family Chorale on WJAR-TV--might have been modest, but soon they were championed by the Rhode Island and Boston press and pushed in front of the brighter TV lights-- on the Ed Sullivan, Mike Douglas and Jack Parr shows--and bigger stages, which they shared with Jimmy Durante, Buster Keaton, Maria von Trapp, Bob Newhart, Hermione Gingold, Dick Gregory, and many others.

Set against the churning backdrop of war in Vietnam and the impassioned drive of the civil rights movement, this large Rhode Island family set out on the first of what would prove a long series of tours as they crisscrossed the nation and Canada in a pair of monogrammed Chevroleets.

Don't Think It Hasn't Been Fun with its uplifting musical interludes is a family memoir to sit back and enjoy with an open heart and a joyous spirit. 

Information courtesy of the Artist



Burke Family Singers in Stowe, Vermont, Christmas 1964, at the Trapp Family Lodge with Maria von Trapp.

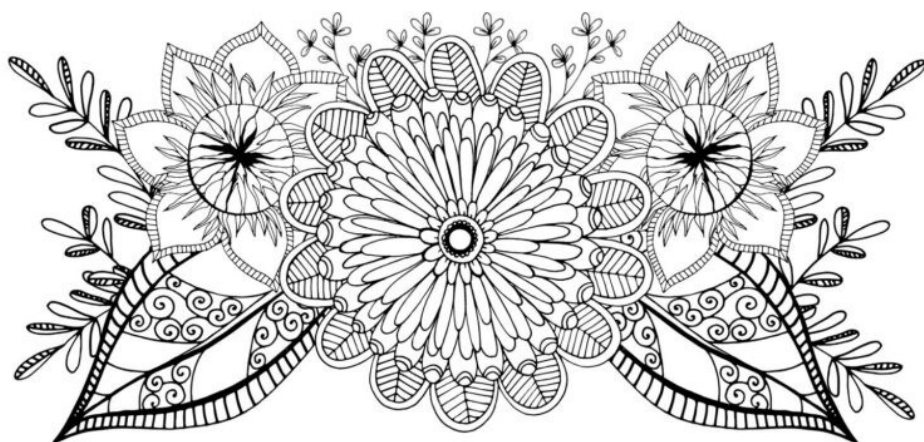


Gabby Santos performing the prelude for the Christmas Eve service.

Children are ~~the future of~~ the church! learning in faith

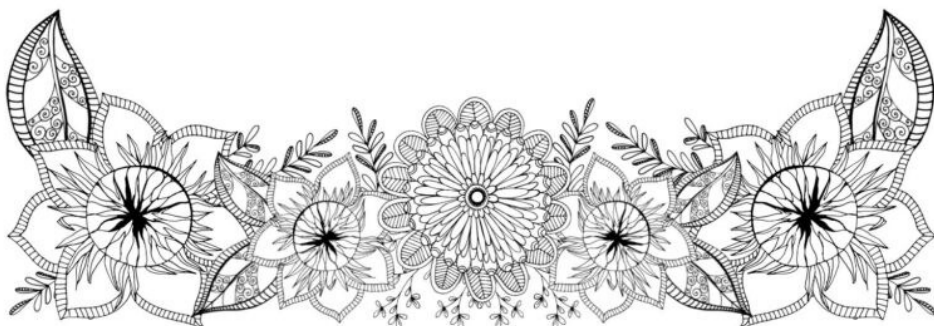
Hello EWCC Family!

When I was in college I attended a Catholic church. The priest had a wonderful, joyful sense of the world evidenced by the benediction he gave the first time I attended; he told us to go forth with God and enjoy the Big E! That priest also, frequently, pointed out that God speaks to us through children. The purest laughter. The truest pain. Children express that. But, he said, he have to listen carefully to all the children around us in order to hear God.



Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Matthew 5:5 NIV



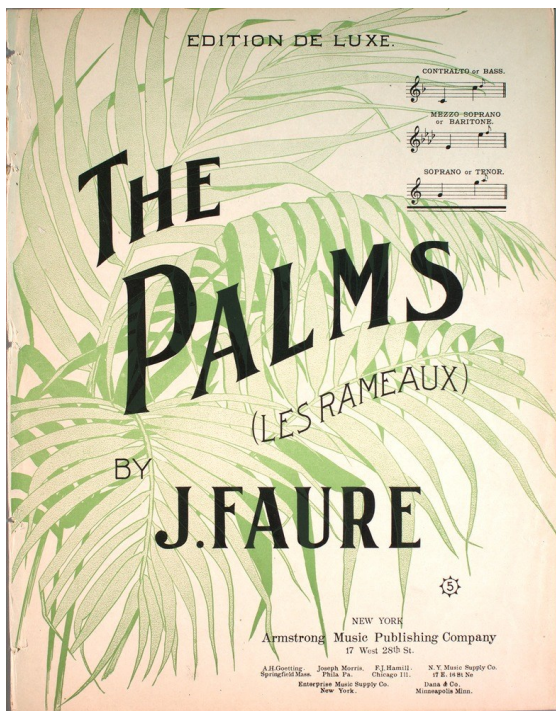
That is the gift of Sunday school time with the children of our church; listening to how they channel the joys and pains and fears and wonders that God puts in our lives.

Last year featured hopes and dreams and lots of excitement. We continue to we share more of that as we move forward into Lent! Our monthly schedule includes joining communion on the first Sunday, splitting into two classes the second and/or the third Sunday, and a Children's Chapel on the final Sunday. The students appreciate the variety and it helps them connect more in worship in the sanctuary.

Recent study has found us joining the crowds and learning about the Beatitudes and the importance of Jesus' message in the 'Sermon on the Mount'.

As we navigate our Lenten "landscape", we will endeavor to make more tangible the Scriptures: practicing our listening skills and learning from one another as part of God's family.

Jessica Weaver Boose




AN EAST WOODSTOCK TRADITION

In 1933, Vernon T. Wetherell created and directed the first Palm Sunday EWCC Men's Choir which sang *The Palms, Lift Up Your Heads*, and *Nearer My God to Thee*, as arranged by Mr. Wetherell. All men in the community were welcomed to sing. Families filled the pews, ladies and daughters wore hats and gloves. A marvelous sight, to be sure.

It was this same Vernon T. Wetherell, who, as a young farmer, was inspired and dedicated to raising funds to replace the reed organ with a Frazee Pipe organ. That organ was installed and dedicated in April 1929 just prior to the stock market crash and beginning of the Great Depression.

Windsor White recently shared that he is the fourth generation of his family to sing, and is proud that son Chapman, will be the fifth!

All community men are invited to carry on this rich music history by joining the men's Palm Sunday chorus. Please come to rehearsal Tuesday, April 8th at 7PM. 

OUTREACH CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Buckets will be available on Sunday, March 30th, and must be returned on Palm Sunday, April 13th. DCF will be picking buckets for children on Monday, April 14th for delivery.

Food pantries all over are experiencing a greater need for those dealing with food insecurity. EWCC is no exception. Currently, our food pantry is in need of the following items: canned soups; tuna; tomato sauce; coffee. We appreciate your generous support of our efforts to help feed those in need in our community.

Food contributions continue to be gleefully accepted for **CARING CONTINUES** for our Woodstock families & children in need of food security: peanut butter, grape jelly, tuna, spaghetti sauce (in small plastic containers) are so very helpful. *Your generous contributions truly make a difference! Thank you!*

connecting...

Whether you are 5, 15, 55 or 95, we'd like to hear from you: a learning, news, remembrances, a favorite Jamboree / coffee social recipe—what moved you, made you laugh, cry, or otherwise has made a difference in your life at EWCC. *Your story is our story* and an important part of our journey!

Chally Wooten recently shared that she is so very appreciative to everyone who continues to send cards, call, or visit: "The church has been a large part of my life, and while I can't get there for now, I still feel a part of this spiritual community. I feel cared for by so many. Thank you!"

CHANGES TO E-DELIVERY: Beginning 3/12/25, we'll be using our MailChimp email platform to send The Trumpet, Sunday Bulletin, and continuing to send the Weekly Reminder. Please make sure your contact information is correct in the **2025 DIRECTORY**. *If you have any changes, corrections, or additions for the 2025 Community Directory, please call the office, 860.928.7449 or email churchoffice@eastwoodstockchurch.org.*

Wear your green & come join us for

"O'BUNKO"



March 15th, 6:30PM

EWCC Fellowship Hall

Don't know how to play? No worries, we'll teach you!

A wee sweet snack will be provided

Sign up in Fellowship Hall or contact
Dorrie at 860.455.6108

HOLDING ON

When I got married, I changed my last name.

It turned out to be a challenging transition for me. I didn't realize how many places my birth name appeared. I had to send official documents to work, to the government, to the Post Office, credit card companies, and a myriad of other places. Each time I did, I felt like I was erasing myself. I felt like I was becoming unmade.

I hadn't fully realized how much my name was a part of me. What I had been called and known as all my life was deeply rooted in me. In some deep ways it defined me. My name reminded me of who I belonged to; who I was related to; who I honored; and who I could hold on to.

So, what are you holding onto as our world seems to be becoming unmade? What can anchor us in the overwhelming turmoil swirling around us?

There is a story that comes to mind that some of you may be familiar with. In 1945, As World War II was drawing to a close, the Allied armies gathered up thousands of children who had been orphaned during the bombing

sharing the good news

raids. They were placed in camps where they received food and good care. But despite the excellent care, the children slept poorly at night.

They were nervous and afraid. They feared waking up to find themselves once again homeless and without food. Nothing seemed to reassure them. Finally, someone came up with a solution. Each child was given a piece of bread to hold after they were put to bed. Holding their bread, the children could finally sleep in peace. All through the night, the bread reminded them, 'Today I ate and I will eat again tomorrow.'

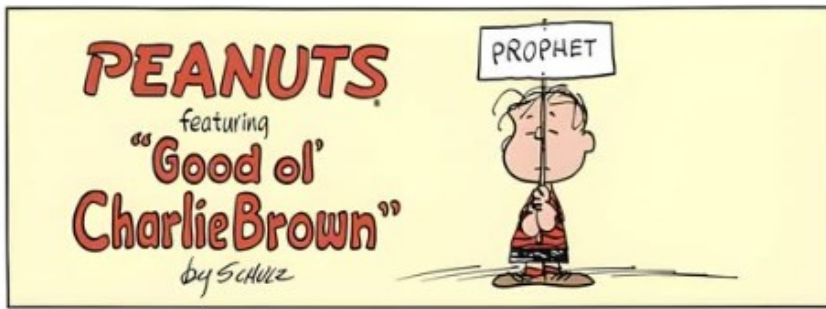
This past Sunday, many of you joined together at Christ's table, our anchor in every storm. When we share Communion, each of us is given a piece of bread to hold onto. Bread that offers us spiritual nourishment and sustenance for today and all our tomorrows. Bread that offers us peace. Bread that reminds us we are beloved. We gather and hold onto the Bread of Life.

We anchor and ground ourselves as we take bread, give thanks to God for it, bless it, break it, and share it. After all, it is in the breaking of bread that Jesus disciples recognize him. Month after month, year after year, we take this bread in the name of Jesus, and in deep ways it defines us. It reminds us who we belong to; who we are related to; who we honor; and who we can hold on to. It also reminds us of who is always holding on to us.

Jesus invites us to gather as loving siblings and share a meal, so that when the world around, and maybe within us is becoming unmade, we can hold onto each other and cling to Jesus, the Bread of Life who promised to be with us, even to the end of the ages. We are not alone. You are not alone. Please reach out if you need anything.

Peace be with you,
Pastor Carol

Rev. Carol Steinbrecher is the Area Conference Minister for the North Central Region.



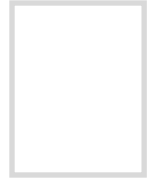
This first appeared February 17, 1974



East Woodstock Congregational Church

Post Office Box 156

East Woodstock, Connecticut 06244



Easter Flowers

To order flowers for Easter, please complete the following information below.

Given by: _____

To Honor: _____

In Memory of: _____

Tulips (6'') Lilies (6'') Daffodils (7'')

Tulips _____ @ 13.00 ea.

Daffodils _____ @ 17.00 ea.

Lilies _____ @ 16.00 ea.

Total: \$ _____

*Please enclose a check for the cost made out to
EWCC / PO Box 156 / East Woodstock, CT 06244;
you may also drop off at the office. **Deadline: April 6th***

