


The Trumpet MAY 2025
A publication of the East Woodstock Congregational Church, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



LENTEN DESERT TRANSFORMS WITH GIFTS OF STONES, PLANTS, AND SPIRITUAL INTENTION

Beginning the first Sunday of Lent, way back in March, our Chancel was converted into a desert. Each successive week brought different items: stones with messages and prayers, dried brush, water, mosses and succulents, and finally the palms and lush flowers in the Garden of Gethsemane and the “planting of our blooms” on Easter. Children actively participated in this altarscape, as did many of their family members. Thank you to everyone who joined in this meaningful experience.

TRANSITION 2 TEAM CONTINUES TO COLLECT INFORMATION FROM COMMUNITY TOWARD PROFILE

Members of the Transition 2 Team are in the process of compiling information gleaned from our April Survey in preparation for our Church Profile.

On June 1, the completed Profile will be distributed; June 8 will provide for questions and discussion, and then a Congregational meeting on June 22 for a vote on the Profile.

If you have ANY questions regarding this process, or would like to provide input, please contact a member of the Transition 2 Team. Pastor Gary is also available to speak with congregants who may not have had a chance to chat about this process, their concerns, or vision for the future of EWCC.

ABOUT OUR NEW MEMBERS (in case you didn't already know!)

Stacy (Neely) Vogt grew up in East Woodstock and has always attended EWCC, even after moving to Brooklyn. It has always been home to her. She has 2 adult children, Adam & Amy. She enjoys helping people, including as a volunteer in Muddy Brook Fire Dept, driving her Classic Mustang, and traveling. She loves any time spent with family and friends.

Linda Kaplan moved to Woodstock with husband Greg after retiring. A busy person, she has taught second grade, taught music, owned a restaurant, and worked with nursing homes and home health agencies for 20 years. A Master Gardener, she is past president of the Quiet Corner Garden Club and currently serves on the board of Federated Gardeners of Connecticut.



From Desert to Garden, Lent / Easter 2025



Albert Einstein, probably the most famous scientist in modern times, in 1930 wrote the book *What I Believe* in which he said, "The most beautiful emotion we can experience is the mysterious. It is the fundamental emotion that stands at the cradle of all true art and science. . . . To sense that behind anything that can be experienced there is something that our minds cannot grasp, whose beauty and sublimity reaches us only indirectly: this is religiousness."*

Einstein emphasized that comprehending our universe scientifically relies upon belief in the God who brought about this universe. Acknowledging a divine Creator in one's scientific worldview brings understanding to what was once not understood. At the same time, Einstein realized the profound truth that some things are beyond scientific explanations, such as God, love, and faith. Einstein had reverence for the mysterious.

The mysterious, I would say, is also the source of our Christian faith, especially the resurrection. We should not be embarrassed to admit that the resurrection of the dead is beyond scientific or rational explanation. We should not be ashamed to profess that God's raising Jesus Christ from the dead, and to believe that God will resurrect our dead bodies one day also, is truly a mystery. After all, how could someone who is biologically

dead ever return to life? Do we experience anything in the physical world that does this? And our faith teaches us not only that Christ returned to life three days later (actually between 36 and 39 hours later) but also that he did so in a glorified body never to die again. And the same is promised to each of us who believe in Christ as our Lord and Redeemer.

The experience of the early believers that Christ was alive again motivated them to gather together on Sunday, the day God raised Jesus from the dead, to worship the astounding God who accomplished this amazing feat. We need to observe that same practice today. To claim that one believes in the resurrection, but does not attend church is like saying one is a Boston Red Sox fan, but never attends their games at Fenway Park, never watches Sox games on television, never listens to their games on the radio, never goes online to see if they won or lost nor studies their box scores to see who played and how they performed. What kind of a Red Sox fan is that? If we do not attend worship services, what does that testify about our belief in the resurrection? What does that say about our claim to be a follower of Jesus?

What we must really do as Christians is reverence the resurrection. We must hold God's raising Jesus Christ from the dead as the cornerstone of our faith. We must hold it in high honor. We must cling to it with profound awe and respect. We must proclaim it as one of the cardinal mysteries of our faith, as is said on the Sundays when we celebrate Holy Communion: "Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again." Even on those Sundays when we don't recite this confession, we show by our presence in the congregation that we worship the God who raised Jesus from the dead in a glorified, immortal physical body. We do this in anticipation of our own selves being resurrected from the dead one day.

*Walter Isaacson, *Einstein: His Life and Universe* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007), 387.

Blessings in the Name of the Risen One,

Pastor Gary



Our film series seemed to generate enthusiasm (for both film and follow up discussion!) On Good Friday, we showed clips of Hollywood's take on the Crucifixion (Ben Hur, The Passion of the Christ, The Greatest Story Ever Told). Unfortunately, we ran out of time for The Last Temptation of Christ. For those who would like to continue with the film series, please speak to Pastor Gary, and we could schedule a full showing of Scorsese's reimagined vision of the last days of Jesus.

DRAW US FORTH

Draw us forth, God of all creation.
Draw us forward and away from limited certainty
into the immense world of your love.
Give us the capacity to even for a moment
taste the richness of the feast you give us.
Give us the peace to live with uncertainty,
with questions,
with doubts.
Help us to experience the resurrection anew
with open wonder and an increasing ability
to see you in the people of Easter.

Unknown

DEAR GOD

Spring is a metaphor for change.
Some changes we eagerly await,
and some we abhor.
Some changes we plan
and others arrive uninvited.
To all these changes we ask the gift of
Your perspective beckoning us
to expectation, hope, and rebirth.
May the sunlight and the rain be reminders
that You are at work renewing the earth.
As a God of renewal,
You are ever at work in our lives, too.
Open our eyes and lives
to the needed changes
in our lives this Spring.
Awaken us to new life and perspective,
for we pray in Jesus' name.

AMEN.

The Reverend Mark Bekkedahl

Oh, give us pleasure in the flowers to-day;
And give us not to think so far away
As the uncertain harvest; keep us here
All simply in the springing of the year.

Oh, give us pleasure in the orchard white,
Like nothing else by day, like ghosts by night;
And make us happy in the happy bees,
The swarm dilating round the perfect trees.

And make us happy in the darting bird
That suddenly above the bees is heard,
The meteor that thrusts in with needle bill,
And off a blossom in mid air stands still.

For this is love and nothing else is love,
The which it is reserved for God above
To sanctify to what far ends He will,
But which it only needs that we fulfill.

Robert Frost

The following are the scriptures for the remainder of this month. You are invited to read them as part of your daily devotions and as preparation for worship. For daily devotions, please go to:
<https://www.sneucc.org/lectionary>

May 11 Fourth Sunday of Easter

Acts 9:36-43, Psalm 23, Revelation 7:9-17,
John 10:22-30

May 18 Fifth Sunday of Easter

Acts 11:1-18, Psalm 148, Revelation 21:1-6,
John 13:31-35

May 25 Sixth Sunday of Easter

Acts 16:9-15, Psalm 67,
Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5, John 14:23-29
or John 5:1-9

June 1 Seventh Sunday of Easter

Acts 16:16-34, Psalm 97,
Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21,
John 17:20-26

worship & prayer

Continuing to pray for...

- Christine Gambardella, receiving chemotherapy for a recent cancer diagnosis
- The family of Richard Baron, whose brother passed away in late March.
- Arabella Berkenbilt, continuing to seek a diagnosis and treatment for GI issues
- Pam Brown, continued prayers for recovery
- Barbara Morse, continued prayers for recovery
- Jasmin Floyd's Care Team as they move forward in grief and remembrance
- Our church community as we continue to make our transition toward a settled pastor

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

She and her husband have 2 children and 5 grandchildren.

Always with a smile and pun handy, **Windsor White** says: "There are two old songs that come to mind here, one (and the one more recognizable) was Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes song 'If You Don't Know Me By Now' and more obscure, the Amazing Rhythm Aces tune 'Same Old Me'.

Jessica Weaver Boose grew up in South Woodstock, with parents who were very active in the town and schools. Friends from a Covenant church led Jess and her husband to the UCC. Involved with children and church settings for over 25 years, Jess has also planned and led service retreats. She currently serves as EWCC Christian Ed. Director.

Lucy Bousquet shares: "When my husband Rick and I moved to Woodstock 18 years ago, I looked for a way to connect with the town as we didn't have children in the school system, and certainly found it here at EWCC. I have never felt so welcome and a part of an entity so meaningful and giving. Our church and congregation are just wonderful, and I enjoy being on committees and singing with the choir."

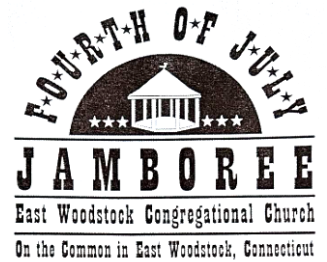
A veteran Congregationalist, **Mary Oliver** is a native of nearby Hampton, where her first Sunday School teacher informed her mother, she was, at six, "too bold". A "connector" by vocation, Mary has been a social worker with Head Start, local recovery and shelter programs, and most recently the EWCC Admin. She and wife Arabella Berkenbilt, live in Putnam with their boisterous pack of Norwegian Elkhounds.

CHANGES TO E-DELIVERY: We continue to use our MailChimp email platform to send The Trumpet, Sunday Bulletin, and continuing to send the Weekly Reminder. Please make sure your email contact information is correct. *If you have any changes please call the office, 860.928.7449 or email churchoffice@eastwoodstockchurch.org.*

IT'S ALMOST THAT TIME AGAIN!

Planning is underway for our 69th Fourth of July Jamboree. This is our largest FUNdraiser of the year—we appreciate and encourage input from our congregation—our next meeting is May 20 at 7PM in the Chapel. Many hands make good work and a successful Jamboree! Stay tuned with the Reminder and Bulletin for upcoming meetings.

Lynn Looby



LADIES BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

The May 21st meeting will be Say It with Flowers with Dorrie Scranton. Nancy Young & Deb Sherman, hosts, Pam Brown will provide the Reflection.

OUTREACH

With the generosity and creativity of our community, Outreach was able to have over 40 Easter baskets filled for children at United Services Domestic Violence Shelter and Covenant to Care.

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: Peanut butter, Spaghetti or Angel Hair pasta (we have plenty of other pasta types), Tomato sauce - cans or jars, Canned Beans - (not green beans), Soups, Juices, Coffee & Tea. 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!*

Outreach Committee volunteers welcomed event-goers on May 3rd, creating a friendly space for connection, laughter, and creativity. Thank you to all who shared the joy!



connecting...

Here's the church. Here's the steeple. Open the door , find friendly caring people. I can see the church steeple from many areas of my house which remind me that I am a member of the East Woodstock Congregational Church. I stepped into the sanctuary on a Sunday in 2001 and found myself returning to worship and work on a number of committees with a lot of new friends. George Brown Sr. said " Young lady, it's time you joined the church." I was 70 at the time.

Lucy Davis passed me the job of the Cradle Roll. I asked her if she liked the new backing I put on it. She replied. "Not important. Do you like it?". Esther Foskett honored me with taking on the Thanksgiving Cornucopia . "You must do it your way" she insisted. The memories of being a member of the Hospitality and the Altar Guild committees are still important to me. I can no longer do the work but I can still make the ice ring for the punch bowl!

I am thankful for the gift of friends, the church family , online church, and the church staff. Special thanks for the outstanding music. Nancy remembers to play "Catch A Falling Star" for me. Special church, Special people. Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love.

Dottie Carlyle

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!

LOCAL INITIATIVE SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

Parent's Corner, a local initiative dedicated to creating family-friendly spaces throughout our community. We're currently seeking volunteers to support several upcoming events across the Quiet Corner this spring and summer.

These volunteer opportunities are a great way for others to earn community service hours, gain hands-on experience, and support local families in meaningful ways. Tasks include event setup and breakdown, assisting parents and caregivers, and staffing comfort stations during events. Shifts are flexible, and no long-term commitment is required.

Upcoming Events:

Superhero Saturday – May 17 Downtown Putnam
10:00am–1:00pm

Putnam Fine Arts & Crafts Festival – June 21 & 22
200 School Street, Putnam 10:00am–4:00pm

For more info: director@parentscorner.com / 860.382.7900

passages

Craftsman, community builder, devout person of faith, Bill Cruttenden passed away on April 8.

Jasmin Floyd, artist and entrepreneur, FOP advocate, and shining light to her mom RoJeanne, passed on April 20.

Both are dearly missed by family, friends, and community. May their memory be a blessing to all.

thank you...

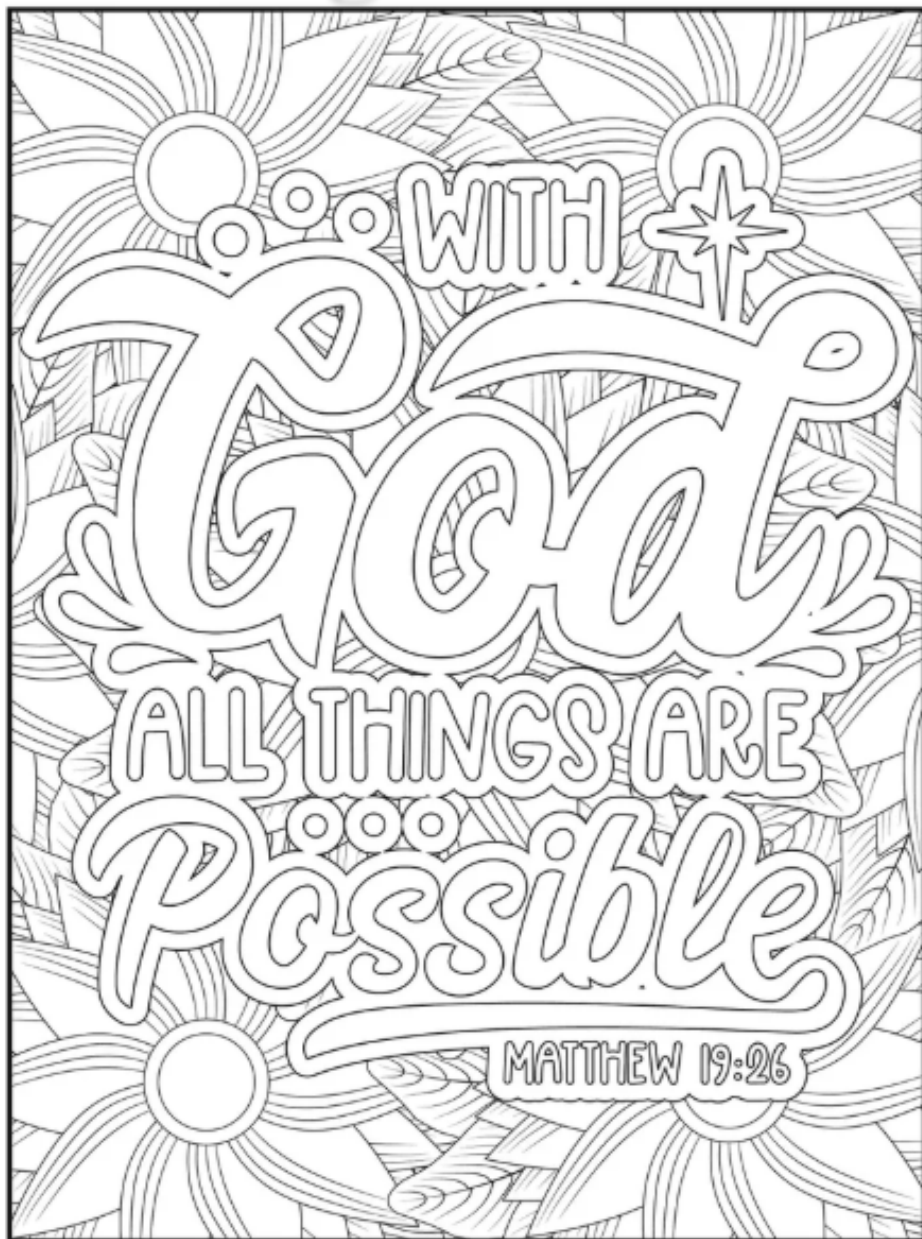
...to the many hands that made a meaningful Lent and Easter season: Dorrie Scranton, Jessica Weaver Boose. ...and the many hands that continue to bake their tasty blessings for hospitality through the many events this winter and spring.

...Seth and DeEtta Spalding for the most fragrant and beautiful compost that Christine and Glen Lessig have delighted to enhance our garden beds at EWCC. ...and to the many who cared for Jasmin and RoJeanne in their final transitions—thank you all.

Laurie Edwards, Come on down! Our very own Laurie will be featured on The Price is Right on June 20th. A whirlwind weekend in LA was "more fun than a barrel of monkeys! Unbelievable"



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



The conversation around community and how Jesus worked to build community around love and grace and re-interpreting old laws, continues in the EWCC classrooms.

Recently, we ended up doing a deep dive into the story of Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10). There is a lot to talk about in that short story about a short man's encounter with Jesus, who was at a high point of his ministry. We had some real talk about how creepy it can be for someone you don't know to know your name, although it can be flattering if they are a 'celebrity' of some kind. We talked about being kind to people who are different, even if they are funny looking and thieves. We also talked about how Jesus was judged by peers for being kind to the wrong kind of people, the 'sinners'. *We talked about how kindness opens us, and others, to change and to trying new things.*

Zacchaeus gave back the money he had stolen AND he gave half of what he had acquired to the poor, all because Jesus gave him a chance.

How can we be more like Zacchaeus?
How can we be more like Jesus?

UPCOMING DATES

June 8th: Children's Sunday

June 15th Confirmation Sunday

Jessica Weaver Boose

WELCOME TO THE SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE ANNUAL MEETING!

As we celebrate the accomplishments in our sixth year as the SNEUCC, We are excited to invite you to the 2025 Annual Meeting. We are exploring the theme ***Into the Deep: Living and Leading at the Intersections***, based on Luke 5 and our UCC General Synod theme. United Church of Christ Congregations sit at the intersections of service and justice in their local communities, and we will honor that at the Southern New England Conference's 6th Annual Meeting. Please register online by May 19th: <https://www.sneucc.org/eventdetail/18362882>

Into the DEEP

Living and Leading at the Intersections

SNEUCC 6th Annual Meeting

June 7 ~ 9 AM to 1 PM ~ Online



Southern New England Conference
United Church of Christ
Living the Love & Justice of Jesus



SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

 <p>UPCOMING: June 8: Children's Sunday June 15: Confirmation Sunday</p> <p>BIRTHDAYS: 5/2 Becket M. 5/20 Avery D. 5/10 Devin N. 5/23 Margaret W. 5/11 Olivia S.</p>				1	2	3
				Bells 7PM	Food Fair 9AM	PRIDE Putnam
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Worship 10AM Confirmation Class, 11:30AM Memorial 2PM EWCB 6:30PM	Community Kitchen	Choir 7PM	Bible Study 10:30AM Al-Anon, 7:30PM	Bells 7PM	Mom's Club 9:30AM	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Worship 10AM Special Meeting Confirmation Class, 11:30AM EWCB 6:30PM Mother's Day	Outreach, 6PM	Choir 7PM	Bible Study 10:30AM Al-Anon, 7:30PM	Bells 7PM		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Worship 10AM Confirmation Class, 11:30AM EWCB 6:30PM	Society 7PM Dartball 7PM	Choir 7PM Jamboree 7PM	Bible Study 10:30AM LBS 1:30PM Al-Anon, 7:30PM	Bells 7PM		
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Worship 10AM Confirmation Class, 11:30AM EWCB 6:30PM	Memorial Day Book Club to meet in June	Choir 7PM Council 7PM	Bible Study 10:30AM Al-Anon, 7:30PM	Bells 7PM		



East Woodstock Congregational Church

Post Office Box 156

East Woodstock, Connecticut 06244



ATTIC TREASURES

Our dedicated team continues to make our Jamboree's HUGE tag sale, Attic Treasures, the talk of the town! This year we will continue with best practices for those who donate, volunteer, & shop!

We are VERY INTERESTED in your donations including:
antiques, artwork, new & like-new items, baskets, children's toys
and baby items, craft supplies & fabric, games & puzzles, garden items,
glassware (sets or 4 or more, please!), china sets, home décor, house-
hold, hardware, and housewares, kitchen
items, lamps, and tools. We are accepting
CLEAN, like-new soft goods including
curtains, vintage and lightly used linens, and
pillows that have been pre-cleaned. Small
furniture items will be accepted on a case by
case basis as our space is limited. Questions?
Call Judith Wong at 203-400-1224.

