



# The Trumpet

MARCH 2026

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



*This letter was released from our Executive Conference Minister & President, The Rev. Dr. Darrell Goodwin for Ash Wednesday. These are selected excerpts from that missive.*

Beloved Siblings in Christ,  
We mark our foreheads with ash, a visible reminder that we are dust, that we are finite, that we are bound to one another in fragile and sacred humanity. In a moment when our nation feels restless, loud, divided, and rising with both righteous protest and dangerous rhetoric, Lent arrives not as escape, but as invitation.

An invitation to go deeper. An invitation to remember who we are. An invitation to strengthen *the ties that bind*.

Across our country, we are witnessing activism, resistance, organizing, and uprising. Some are marching in the streets. Some are legislating. Some are grieving. Some are exhausted. Many are asking: *What does faith require of us now?*

Lent does not call us away from the world. It calls us into it, more rooted, more disciplined, more clear.

Jesus' forty days in the wilderness were not passive. They were formative. The wilderness clarified his identity and strengthened his resolve for the ministry ahead. Before he overturned tables, before he challenged empire, before he carried a cross, he was grounded in prayer, fasting, and community.

So too for us.

If we are to be a people who speak truth to power, we must also be a people bound to one another in love. If we are to resist injustice, we must also resist the temptation to fracture among ourselves. If we are to march toward Easter, we must do so not as isolated congregations, but as one body in many locations.

Our denominational charge has always been clear: *"that they all may be one."* That unity has never meant uniformity. It has meant covenant. It has meant choosing relationship even when strained. It has meant believing that the Spirit binds us together more strongly than fear can tear us apart.

This Lenten season, I invite you to consider: Where might we strengthen trust between congregations? Where might we repair relationships that have thinned? Where might we pray not only for courage in the streets, but tenderness in our sanctuaries? The ties that bind are not sentimental, they are spiritual infrastructure. They are what sustain movements. They are what carry us through crucifixion moments toward resurrection hope.

As we fast, let us fast from cynicism. As we pray, let us pray for one another by name. As we give, let us give ourselves more fully to community.

Beloved, this is not a season for retreating from the world. It is a season for deepening our spiritual muscles so that when we act, we do so anchored in Christ...The darkness may feel loud. But the Light still binds us. And resurrection still awaits.

May this Lent strengthen our courage, deepen our compassion, and tighten the sacred ties that hold us together.

In covenant and hope....



Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a brilliant theologian during Nazi rule in Germany who died a martyr in a concentration camp because of his resistance to the Nazi movement. One of the more intriguing ideas that Bonhoeffer wrote about in his letters from prison was God's weakness and suffering in "the world come of age."

A very misguided idea (there were many) that Christian theology inherited from ancient Greek philosophy was the "impassibility of God." This means that God is incapable of suffering. God is incapable of suffering because God is incapable of change. The reason for this is because any change in God would need to be for better or worse. Since God is already perfect, God cannot be made better. That means that the only other change available would be one that makes God worse, which is likewise unacceptable, for then God would no longer be perfect, and therefore no longer be God. And so, God cannot suffer, that is, be affected by something else, because God is absolutely self-sufficient, self-determining, and independent. It all sounds very logical, doesn't it? Sometimes, however, we shouldn't rely on logic. Sometimes logic

can deceive us. Sometimes logic can be very harmful to our faith.

Did Jesus really suffer, or did it only appear that he suffered? I cannot see how any normally functioning person living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century can believe that Jesus only appeared to suffer, but didn't really. I don't want to turn this message into a profound theological argument that tries to reconcile Jesus's divine nature with his real human suffering. I am simply taking it for granted that Jesus really, truly, intensely suffered physically, emotionally, and spiritually. If that goes against traditional Christian theology, then it's time to change traditional Christian theology!

Why should suffering be considered a weakness, even for God? In his Nazi prison cell, Bonhoeffer claimed that "only the suffering God can help." A God who sits aloof in heaven, unmoved by what happens on earth, is really a rather pathetic God (pun intended!). We should feel sorry for such a God. That was not the God that Bonhoeffer knew in Jesus Christ, the God who was there beside him in his prison cell, the God who was there beside the millions of others who lost their lives in the extermination camps.

Let us during this Lenten season reflect on what Bonhoeffer says below:

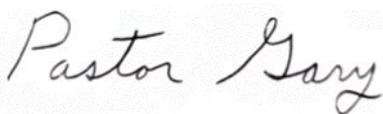
And we cannot be honest unless we recognize that we have to live in the world *etsi deus non daretur* [as if God did not exist]. And this is just what we do recognize--before God! God himself compels us to recognize it. So our coming of age leads us to a true recognition of our situation before God. God would have us know that we must live as men who manage our lives without him. The God who is with us is the God who forsakes us (Mark 15:34). The God who lets us live in the world without the working hypothesis of God is the God before whom we stand continually. Before God and with God we live without God. God lets himself be pushed out of the world on to the cross. He is weak and powerless in the world, and that is precisely the way, the only way, in which he is with us and helps us. Matthew 8:17 makes it quite clear that Christ helps us, not by virtue of his omnipotence, but by virtue of his weakness and suffering.

(Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*, 360-361)

Christ goes to the cross willingly to show how much God loves us. He doesn't go there to avert God's wrath toward human sinfulness. He doesn't go there as a perfect sacrifice to satisfy God's honor or demand for justice. He doesn't go there as a ransom to the devil. All of these are historic theories of the atonement put forth by learned theologians in church history. With all due respect to these brilliant minds, I believe that they are mistaken. Christ goes to demonstrate God's abundant love for the world. That's right, a remarkable love for sinful humans like you and me. As we watch Jesus being marched by Roman soldiers, stumbling under the weight of the cross upon which he will be tortured and killed, God watches us to observe our reaction. What is our response? What are our thoughts? What are our feelings?

During these days of Lent, let us examine our response to this incredible act of love that we may be not just a bystander to the event, but a participant walking alongside Jesus, hanging there with him on the cross, commending our own spirits to God.

Blessings in Christ,



### WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MAUNDY THURSDAY?

Christians all over the world commemorate Maundy Thursday. It is called “Holy Thursday” in some traditions. The word “Maundy” comes from the Latin word *Mandatum*, which means “commandment.” On this night Jesus gives his disciples the commandment to “love one another . . . as I have loved you” as recorded in John 13:34. In this way, everyone would know that they were his disciples. On this night Jesus also instituted the sacrament of Holy Communion or the Lord’s Supper. Following the partaking of the bread and cup, Jesus and his disciples left the Upper Room and traveled to the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus experienced intense anguish because he knew the dreaded future that awaited him. It was here that Jesus prayed as the foreboding hour approached. On this night, he would be betrayed by one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, and would be arrested by the temple police and some of their priests. Jesus is then forced to testify at several sham trials before the Sanhedrin--the chief council of the Jewish religious leadership, consisting mostly of chief priests but some Pharisees-- Pontius Pilate, and King Herod Antipas before finally receiving the death sentence by Pilate. On Good Friday, Jesus is led to Calvary Hill to be crucified along with two criminals. The altar table and lectern will be left without paraments for the Maundy Thursday service, signifying Christ’s approaching suffering and death and the sadness and sorrow that will be experienced by his disciples and followers. The service will begin at 7:00pm on April 2 in the sanctuary.

### 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 1

*Second Sunday in Lent*

Genesis 12:1-4a,  
Psalm 121,  
Romans 4:1-5, 13-17  
John 3:1-17 or  
Matthew 17:1-9

#### Sunday, March 8

*Third Sunday in Lent*

Exodus 17:1-7, Psalm 95,  
Romans 5:1-11,  
John 4:5-42

#### Sunday, March 15

*Fourth Sunday in Lent*

1 Samuel 16:1-13,  
Psalm 23,  
Ephesians 5:8-14  
John 9:1-41

#### Sunday, March 22

*Fifth Sunday in Lent*

Ezekiel 37:1-14, Psalm 130  
Romans 8:6-11,  
John 11:1-45

### GOOD FRIDAY MOVIE MATINEE WILL FEATURE THE LAST TEMPTATION OF CHRIST

Martin Scorsese’s shocking film about Jesus remains as controversial today as when it was first released in 1988.

Jesus of Nazareth, a carpenter, tormented by the temptations of demons, the guilt of making crosses for the Romans, pity for the struggling people of the world, and the relentless call of God, sets out to discover God’s will for his life. As his mission nears fulfillment, he must face the greatest temptation of all. Come and see what it is.

This film is not based on the Gospels, but on the novel by Nikos Kazantzakis. Nevertheless it raises some significant questions about who Jesus really was and who he could have been or not been.

The film is rated R, not suitable for youth and children because of the adult themes. We will watch the full movie, 2 hours and 45 minutes, and then have a discussion about its main themes. The film will be shown in Fellowship Hall at 1:00pm on April 3.



#### Sunday, March 29

*Passion or Palm Sunday Palms:*

Psalm 118:1-2,  
19-29, Matthew 21:1-11

Passion: Isaiah 50:4-9a,

Psalm 31:9-16,

Philippians 2:5-11

Matthew 26:14—27:66 or

Matthew 27:11-54

# sharing the good news

The work of the **OUTREACH Committee** never takes a break, and neither do the organizations that it generously supports. One of these has a very personal connection to EWCC: Hole in the Wall Gang Camp. Shared by Barbara Hackett, from son-in-law, Keegan Coderre:

*In the fall of 2021 my daughter Adelaide was diagnosed with cancer. That same year, the Boston Marathon was postponed due to COVID and held in October. After a treatment day on October 11th, our family made the short journey from the Boston House to witness the race in person. We were right at mile 25 and emotions were high. It was hard not to be motivated by the people hurting. Digging deep against the struggle. We cheered hard. Even harder for the charity runners for the local hospitals. I turned to Adelaide and asked, "Do you want me to run a marathon for you?" And with a sly look she responded with a "Do you think you could do that?" She was right in asking. I wasn't even a runner yet. Eight months later we were at The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp in Ashford. We were participating in a Family Weekend for children with serious illnesses and their families. It was Adelaide's first THITWGC experience and the magic hit her hard! She loved every moment at Camp. It literally blew life into a dying child! She had the best weekend of her year, and passed away in my arms four days later. Adelaide never got to see me begin my running journey at The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp that next year. She hasn't seen me run all the miles since, or the way our family has continued to benefit from The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp. But she has*



*been with me. We had a full-blown conversation during my last marathon! So, "Yes Adelaide. I can do this for you!" This year's Boston Marathon is the end of a journey that started that October day in 2021. A journey that I haven't wanted to take, but have been forced to endure. I can do hard things! And I am proud to do them for The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp; a place so special to Addie Bay and countless other children with serious illness and their families.*

For more information on Keegan's Run with Adelaide:  
<https://www.facebook.com/keegan.coderre>

**FOOD PANTRY** Currently, our food pantry is in need of the following items: canned soups; tuna; tomato sauce; coffee, and frozen vegetables. We appreciate your generous support of our efforts to help feed those in need in our community.

## **THE EASTER BUCKETS ARE COMING!**

Once again, our congregation will have the opportunity to brighten the Easter of children in our Covenant to Care families and the children in our local Domestic Violence Shelter and Access Emergency Shelter. Easter is April 5 this year, so **tags and Easter "buckets" will be available on Sunday, March 15, after worship. Filled buckets must be returned by Sunday, March 29. The buckets will be distributed during Holy Week.** Look for Outreach Committee members in Fellowship Hall during coffee hour and sign out bucket a (or two!). This is another way that our church spreads the love of God into our community. Won't you join us? Thanks.

Cris Waldron  
Outreach Co-Chair

**LADIES BENEVOLENT SOCIETY** will meet on March 18 at 1:30pm in Fellowship Hall. Please join us for a presentation by Angela Young and Erica Hermonot about Dairy Farming Today. We will have a brief business update and delicious refreshments provided by Susan Converse and Margaret Woisard. Come and reconnect after our winter hiatus.

The **SEARCH & CALL TEAM** has remained very busy over the past several weeks. We currently have three upcoming interviews scheduled (or are being scheduled) from applications received via the UCC conference. These interviews will be completed during the month of March. In addition to these UCC conference applications, we received a total of 39 applications through the 'Indeed' recruiting website. While most were not a match for our congregation, a few are still under review. Our subscription to 'Indeed' has now ended. While we will not renew the 'Indeed' subscription, we believe it has been a good tool for increasing exposure about our opening. We believe we are on track to have a new settled pastor in place by Rally Day this fall.

Marilyn Rath,  
Co-Chair



# learning in faith

## For Lent 2026 there are three themes being used in our church classrooms:

First, during Lent the church is draped in purple. This is to honor Jesus as our anointed, royal leader, who was mocked by the soldiers that oversaw his crucifixion with purple cloth. This is also to remind us that Jesus suffered both in the desert and on the cross, yet we know Jesus is our king, our rabbi, our teacher, our leader. The Christian Education committee has carried the symbol of purple stoles to our children.

Secondly, the children are the church. They are our leaders, our future, our focus. The children are beloved by God and with each baptism we promise to raise them up in the Love of the Holy Trinity. The other symbol we are talking about in the classrooms is a caterpillar and how it changes to a butterfly. Caterpillars disintegrate in their cocoons and rebuild as new butterflies. Jesus endured so much pain and rejection as he carried out his ministry of love and acceptance. He was turned away by his hometown, by the leaders of his faith, by the government. But he went through that pain and resurrected in order to demonstrate how Holy Love is there for all of us.

Thirdly, the Christian Education Committee has invested in bulletins for our classroom. Each week focuses on a different Bible story. Sometimes we will have covered the story during our classroom time and sometimes we won't. But every week there will be opportunities for you to explore the bulletins with your children. Play the word games and talk about your faith beliefs. These are excellent tools to demonstrating how God is Everywhere!

Peace – Jessica Weaver Boose  
Christian Education Director

## Continuing to Pray for:

- Jamie LaMountain, recovering from a kidney transplant
- Joel Morse, continuing to heal
- Sue Foster's parents
- Lisa Gould, continued recovery
- MacDara, as he struggles for clarity in recovery
- Our church community as we continue to move forward in this transition to a settled pastorate. God hears our prayers and surrounds those we pray for with comfort, strength, and compassion in difficult times.

*“God of calls and courage, you draw us towards your loving embrace even as we face what seems like impossibility. We experience heartache and grief, injustice and cruelty, fear and anxiety as daily teachers on this path of faith. As you call us to go into an uncertain and unknown future, O God, grant us the courage needed to let go of all that we have known so that we can take hold of the new life you are bringing about even now. Though we may not know where we are going, God, your way is revealed moment by moment, step by step, and breath by breath. In the name of the One who so loves the world we pray. Amen.”*

Chad Abbott, UCC

# happenings

## BOOK DISCUSSION

The weather was not quite with us for our Monday meetings, so we have combined our last two with our next meeting on Monday, March 30th, from 7:00-8:30. We will use the first 30 minutes to discuss *The Book Club for Troublesome Women and Wayward Girls*. If you didn't read these books, please come to hear about these two. Maybe we will pique your interest in reading one of them.

Our March selection is *The Correspondent* by Virginia Evans. From Amazon:

*"Filled with knowledge that only comes from a life fully lived, The Correspondent is a gem of a novel about the power of finding solace in literature and connection with people we might never meet in person. It is about the hubris of youth and the wisdom of old age, and the mistakes and acts of kindness that occur during a lifetime."*

## 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, March 24th at 7PM

Wear your green & come join us for

## "O'BUNKO"



March 20th, 7:00PM  
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

## For Pete's Sake

### 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Sing-Along Tribute to Pete Seeger

Hosted by Sally Rogers and Leslie Sweetnam

Sunday, March 22, 2025, 4:00PM

First Congregational Church of Woodstock

(Rte 169 on the Woodstock Green)



Song leaders include:

Bill Harley • Sally Rogers • Howie Bursen •  
Jeff Perkins • Carolyn Brodginiski • Marilyn Ravina • Sandy Pliskin •  
Carol Rossetti • Leslie Sweetnam • Maria Sangiolo • Hugh Blumenfeld

Admission: Suggested donation of \$25

All proceeds benefit The Community Kitchen of NE CT

**A COMMUNITY SEDER** will be held before the Maundy Thursday Service on **April 2nd**. Last year's event drew almost thirty people! Join us! This special potluck will be held in Fellowship Hall beginning at 5PM. If you are interested in help coordinating the meal, setting up, or helping to revision the "humanist Haggadah" (our guide through the seder) please contact Mary Oliver, via email: [churchoffice@eastwoodstockchurch.org](mailto:churchoffice@eastwoodstockchurch.org) or 860.933.0186.

# MARCH

CLICK HERE to go to our Web Calendar

<https://www.eastwoodstockchurch.org/calendar/>

SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Communion Worship 10AM	Community Kitchen	Choir 7PM	Bible Study 10:30AM Al-Anon, 7:30PM	Bells 7PM	Food Fair 9AM	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Worship 10AM EWCB 6:30PM	Outreach, 6PM	Choir 7PM Council, 7PM	Bible Study 10:30AM Al-Anon, 7:30PM	Bells 7PM		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Worship 10AM EWCB 6:30PM	Society 7PM	Choir 7PM	Bible Study 10:30AM LBS, 1:30PM	Bells 7PM	Bunko 7PM Trumpet Deadline	Private Event
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Men's Breakfast 8AM Worship 10AM EWCB 6:30PM		Choir 7PM "The Palms"	Bible Study 10:30AM Al-Anon, 7:30PM	Bells 7PM		
29	30	31	<b>Reminders:</b> 3/29 Easter Baskets/Buckets to be returned <b>Holy Week:</b> 3/29 Palm Sunday 4/2 Community Seder, 5PM Maundy Thursday Service, 7PM 4/3 Good Friday. Film, 1PM 4/5 Easter Sunrise behind Woodstock Academy Easter Service, 10AM			
Palm Sunday Worship 10AM EWCB 6:30PM	Book Discussion 7PM					



**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: March 30th**

