

“Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, ‘Behold your God!’”

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Calendar Insert

Christian Outreach and Service Projects

Our confirmation curriculum requires each confirmand to undertake a service project. The purpose of this requirement is to demonstrate the variety of ways that Christians can use their talents and interests to reach out into the community and provide services in Christ’s name. The confirmand chooses an agency that interests them and then provides five hours of service to them. Then they return to spend five hours planning, publicizing, and preparing ways in which the church can help them provide the service. This is to teach the confirmands that the church community cares about their outreach ministry and supports them.

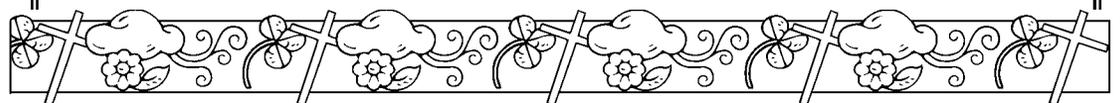
The outreach committee, faced with a 35% decrease in funding, is looking for ways to grow our outreach ministry in the face of these cuts.

We realize that each member cannot support all the requests that are made but should try to focus on one that reflects their interests and concerns and support that request, letting others support the ones they can’t. No one should feel guilty about what they can’t support, but rather feel excited about what they can support. Almost every non-profit service agency is going through this same shrinking support.

First Congregational Church will continue to do what it can, while it can. Thank you for your interest and support as we reach out to our community and region in Christ’s name.

God Bless.

Rev. Dr. Kenneth E. Knox
Pastor



Who is Apollos? And who is Paul? We are simply God’s servants, by whom you were led to believe. Each one of us does the work which the Lord gave him to do: I planted the seed, Apollos watered the plant, but it was God who made the plant grow. (1 Corinthians 3:5-6 TEV)

Here We Grow!

With the month of March here, one can hope that nice warm weather is just around the corner. *Here We Grow!* would like to welcome Deb Pranaitis to the HWG Board of Directors as the representative from the Board of Education. We'd also like to "Thank" Judi Taft for the interest and time she gave to *Here We Grow!* for the first part of the school year.

On February 15, *Here We Grow!* hosted it's Open House. At this time we have only a few spots available for the school year 2005-2006. If you know of anyone with a 3 or 4 year old, please send them our way.

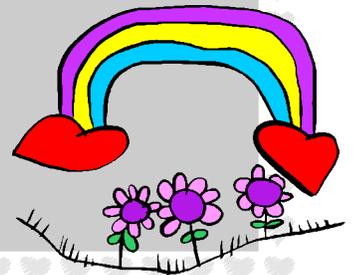
We look forward to a busy month of March. We are planning on having friends of the "Molly Bish Foundation" come to finger print all of our four years olds. We will also have a visit from our photographer, Neal Primeaux, to take pictures of all the children's smiling faces on March 3rd & 4th.

Here We Grow! will have Easter parties on the 17 & 18 of March, and then we are on vacation 3/21-3/25 in honor of Holy Week.

Throughout all these busy times at school, the month of March is also "Parent Volunteer Month". We look forward to the many moms and dads who have signed up to come in and be a helper, read a story, share a talent, or if they are really brave, do a science experiment. It should be a fun time for all.

Until next month, be safe & healthy and think SPRING!

Dawn Murphy,
Director of *Here We Grow! Preschool*



Youth on a Mission

Youth on a Mission has chosen their destination for this summer.

We will be going to Wheeling, WV July 16th - 24th. So far we have 8 young people and three adults. It is NOT too late for people to join Youth on a Mission and go with us this summer.

Our next meetings are February 27th (will be meeting for pizza with the Sutton church youth group) and March 6th during coffee hour for anyone interested who is in High School. We have all age groups represented from Freshman to Seniors.

Our biggest fundraiser is the Auction on April 10th at 1 P.M. There is still A LOT of work and donations needed to make it successful. This is a LIVE auction and it's a lot of fun. We are seeking donations of NEW items or personal services, (ie. baking, yard work, baby-sitting, etc.) I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Carl Johnson who has already made a porch swing/rocker for our auction.

We also have our upcoming Easter candy sale. We'll be distributing free samples and taking orders on March 6th and 13th. Easter candy will be delivered on Palm Sunday the 20th.

If you have any questions about YM or the upcoming fundraisers please see Jen & Randy Bohn or Barbara Jernigan.

Jennifer Bohn
& Youth on a Mission



Smile Section



A wife was making a breakfast of fried eggs for her husband.

Suddenly her husband burst into the kitchen. "Careful .. CAREFUL! Put in some more butter! Oh Good Grief! You're cooking too many at once. TOO MANY! Turn them! TURN THEM NOW! We need more butter. Oh Good Grief! WHERE are we going to get MORE BUTTER? They're going to STICK! Careful ... CAREFUL! I said be CAREFUL! You NEVER listen to me when you're cooking! Never! Turn them! Hurry up! Are you CRAZY? Have you LOST your mind? Don't forget to salt them. You know you always forget to salt them. Use the salt. USE THE SALT! THE SALT!"

The wife stared at him. "What on earth is wrong with you? You think I don't know how to fry a couple of eggs?"

The husband calmly replied, "I just wanted to show you what it feels like when I'm driving".

My forgetter's getting better
But my rememberer is broke
to you that may seem funny
but, to me, that is no joke

For when I'm "here" I'm wondering
If I really should be "there"
And, when I try to think it through,
I haven't got a prayer!

Off times I walk into a room,
Say "what am I here for?"
I wrack my brain, but all in vain
A zero, is my score.

At times I put something away
Where it is safe, but, Gee!
The person it is safest from
Is, generally, me!

When shopping I may see some-
one,
Say "Hi" and have a chat,
Then, when the person walks away
I ask myself, "who's that?"

Yes, my forgetter's getting better
While my rememberer is broke,
And it's driving me plumb crazy
And that isn't any joke.

CleanQuote.

"Middle age is having a choice of two temptations and choosing the one that will get you home earlier."



SPRING CLEANING

The Trustees have asked that anyone with items in the meeting room off of the office hallway (Jr. High room), could you please remove it before the end of March as the room will be cleaned in April.



"Why is it that children aren't allowed to read the Bible in school, but are encouraged to read it in prison?"

You can develop a healthy, robust community that lives right with God and enjoy its results only if you do the hard work of getting along with each other, treating each other with dignity and honor.
(James 3:18)

Library Tidings

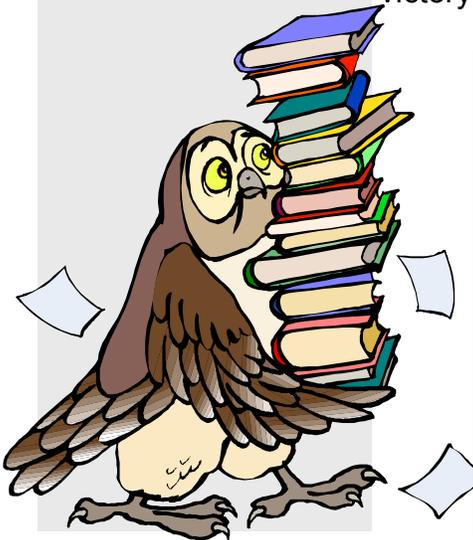
by Gloria Whitehead

The Lenten season is already half spent. The remaining weeks of this month are a perfect time for your introspection, meditation and renewal (categories #10 & #13 especially). Since Ash Wednesday there have been a few of many thought stimulating library books for adults and children (several prayer books for all ages) in Fellowship Hall. Also, there are still a few more nights of Bible Study with Rev. Knox. These bolsters will bring you closer to what Easter is all about and you can reflect that joy.

This is episode II of our late church neighbor, Margaret Parsons, a bright lady who spoke with the strength of her convictions. Time has diminished detailing but Ruth Branch, our library reviver, invited Mrs. Parson to join the committee for tea in appreciation of the Parson's gift of the bookcase. They toured the libraries and upon arrival in the Children's Library, Mrs. Parsons was appalled at the sight of Little Golden Books and wasted no words to let it be known. Dear "Lady" Branch maintained her "cool" and those well written little stories with the delightful illustrations, held their places on the shelves. It has to be added that adorable little Kelly Fox Fant and her other little sisters came to borrow books each Sunday and with their rosy round cheeks they looked exactly as though they'd stepped out of a Golden Book.

New Books: The Wedding - by Nicholas Sparks, given by Avis Britton; The Ten(der) Commandments by Ron Mehl - devoting a chapter to each commandment Ron shows how God uses them to remove the confusion about right and wrong in today's culture; Just Like Jesus (LG. PRINT), by Max Lucado - "God loves you just the way you are, but he refuses to leave you that way. He wants you to be..."; The Easter Story, Hanna & Barbara Video. Thank you to the anonymous giver.

It is Easter by the end of the month. By then, having set aside some RET (religious enrichment time) we each may have bonded with a new portion of spiritual enlightenment of what Christ's victory over death means.
- The Library Committee



Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you. (Romans 12:2 The Message)

ROOF FUNDRAISING

A committee is now being formed to raise funds for our new roof. If you are interested in the opportunity to be a part of this rewarding experience please talk to Mike or Cindy Dube. You may call us at 832-6646 or see us at coffee hour. We have many exciting ideas running through our heads and are looking for some enthusiastic people to join us.



We will be having a CHICKEN BAR-B-CUE on Saturday June 18th. We are hoping to have a SUMMER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION on this same day with possibly a plant sale, kids games and activities, entertainment and more. We hope it will appeal to the local community as a fun family time. We need your help and ideas.



Please plan on joining us for a brief meeting during coffee hour on Sunday March 6th. We'll be waiting for you near the stage!

See you then,
Cindy and Mike



Building Use Reminder



This is a reminder to all groups and organizations that use the church building on a regular basis, to please insure that the area you are using is cleaned properly after each use. In particular the Vestry area has been left a mess a couple times in the last month and we all need to pitch in to keep it clean. If you find an area that your group uses is not clean when you arrive, please take the time to clean it after your particular function or meeting and report the day and time that you found a problem to the Trustees. This is especially important in the kitchen areas as ants (even in winter months) can be attracted to the smallest food or drink spills. Thank you all for your cooperation.



The Board of Trustees





Stewardship...A Way of Life

Last month we spoke of Stewardship being not only of *Time, Talents and Treasures* but also of *Prayer*. Through the entire process of Stewardship, we return to God a portion of our time, talents, and treasures by means of prayer, ministry and finances.

Prayer is the first step in establishing and maintaining one's individual relationship with God. Prayer, whether personal or communal, is not something that is asked of us by the Church. The time we spend in prayer should be a commitment each one of us makes for our own nourishment of soul and emotional health. It should be gratifying and instill a sense of well being. Prayer can provide guidance and solace. When prayer becomes a daily priority, the difficulties we face in our families, jobs and personal relationships are put into perspective.

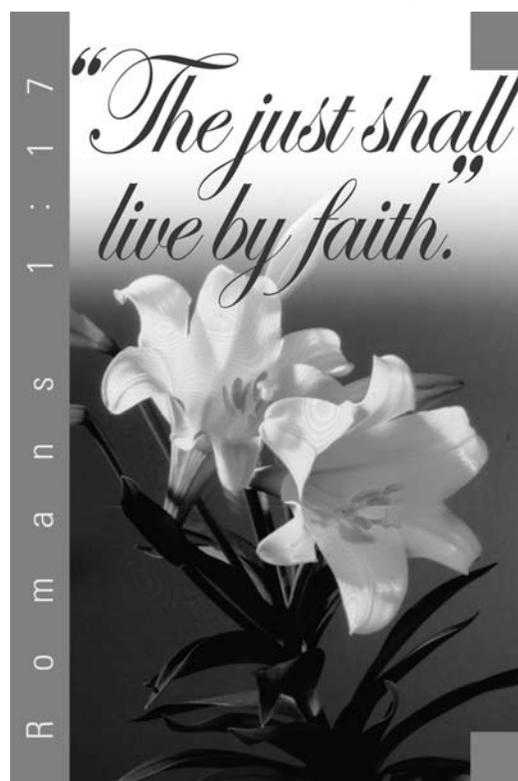
In essence, Stewardship of Prayer consists of asking each one of us to make a daily commitment to prayer throughout the year. Through this commitment, we can make prayer a priority over all the activities that crowd our lives. Only with prayer can our actions become meaningful and help us maintain an awareness of God's presence in our lives.

Along with your personal prayers, please pray for the spiritual and financial well being of our Church. Prayer along with time, talents and treasures can make us all successful in achieving God's purpose.

In his Love,
The Stewardship Committee

"You will find as you look back upon your life that the moments when you have truly lived are the moments when you have done things in the spirit of love."

- Henry Drummond



A note from the office:

Due to SPAM emails and virus concerns, the office would like to ask that if you email the church, please identify yourself in the subject line. For example: **Subject: Tammy Whittier note for the Tidings.** Or **Subject: Stewardship Committee update of meeting time.** This will help me to know that yours is a legitimate email.

The office checks email throughout the day and will always respond that your message was received. If you do not get confirmation that your message was received, please call the office to verify so that your communications get posted.

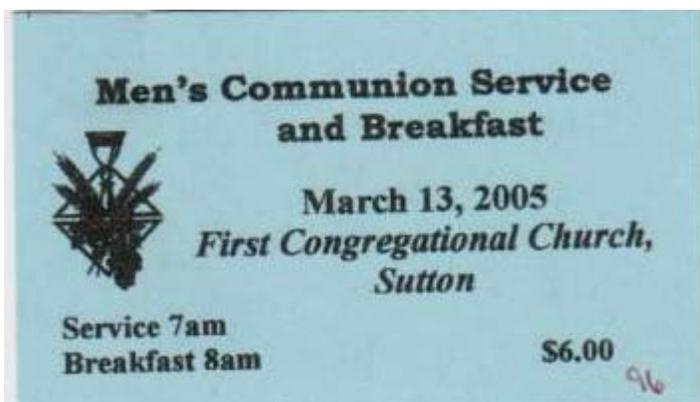
There are still weeks that alter flowers have not been requested. It is very important to let the office know if you will be ordering or if the office will order for you. In cases with more than one flower request, the alter flowers will be whomever signs up first. All other orders will be placed on the rail. I apologize for not communicating this in previous weeks.

Also, if you have a yearly flower order, please let me know as I have started a list.
Thank You!

Men's Ecumenical Communion Service and Breakfast

Ben Britton has again taken command of gathering men for this breakfast event on March 13. Please see Ben if you would like to attend or you may call him at 508-832-2308. The First Congregational Church in Sutton has requested a head count by March 4th so that they may acquire the right amount of food. Tickets are \$6.00. Services start at 7:00 AM, followed by breakfast at 8:00 AM. The guest speaker will be Aggre Abdi Lidonde, founder of the Beverly School in Africa. Abdi lives in Sutton and works at Holy Cross. The topic of his talk is "Education Crisis in Africa and one man's quest to make it better".

Rev. Dr. David Fountain will conduct the service of Holy Communion. Gladys Stewart and her crew will prepare the traditional sumptuous breakfast. This will be an inspiring, informational and uplifting time of fellowship.



Choir Tidings

Palm Sunday and Easter will be music filled services with three anthems to be sung at each service. On Palm Sunday you will hear 'The Palms' by Faure, 'The Lord Comes' and 'On That Day When He Rode into Jerusalem'. 'The Palms' will be sung as a solo by Rev. Knox' talented son Dana. This is actually an enormous work originally written for a full orchestra and 100 voice choir.

'On That Day' is specifically written for Passion Sunday. It was quite challenging to bring together due to the many tempo changes and key changes throughout the work. You will certainly not be bored listening to this one!

'The Lord Comes' is a new anthem for us written for Advent or Palm Sunday. The text is based on Luke 19:40 and Matthew 21:9. It is a bit unusual for an Advent anthem in that it is quite upbeat.

For Easter Sunday, the two choirs will join together to sing 'Halle, Hallelujah' and 'Christ is Risen! Alleluia!' Both anthems will be divided into two parts with the youth taking one part and the adults another. These anthems are wonderfully appropriate for an adult/youth mix which is why we've done them before! As could be expected, both are joyful and up tempo.

'A Peaceful Alleluia' will be sung by the adults only. Although we will have several people missing this Easter, this anthem will be sung in three parts. For those of you who enjoy Pachabels Canon, you will find a similar style and familiarity here. We have a wealth of music coming up; I'm sure there is something for everyone!



Blessings,
Heather Moore
Minister of Music

Lenten Music Schedule



Joyful Noyse Rehearsal Schedule

Sunday, March 6, 13, 20* - 11 A.M. rehearsal
On Easter Sunday, March 27, rehearsal at 8:45 AM
for those singing the 9:00 AM service and 10:15 AM
for those singing the 10:30 AM service
 Anthems: "Christ is Risen Alleluia" &
 "Halle, Hallelujah"*
 *with Adult Choir
 All Anthems subject to change

Minister of Christian Education

Loren Eiseley, a naturalist, tells a story about a star thrower. While he was in the seaside town of Costabel he was plagued by insomnia and so he spent the early morning hours walking the beach. Each day at sunrise, he found townspeople combing the sand for starfish, which had washed ashore during the night, to kill them for commercial purposes. Eiseley thought this was a sign, however small, of all the ways the world says "NO" to life.

One morning, however, Eiseley got up unusually early, and discovered a solitary figure on the beach. This man, too, was gathering starfish, but each time he found one alive he would pick it up and throw it as far as he could out beyond the breaking surf, back to the nurturing ocean from which it came. As days went by, Eiseley found this man embarked on his mission of mercy each morning, seven days a week, no matter the weather.

Eiseley called this man "The Star Thrower." On the beach in Costabel, that one man contradicted everything that Eiseley had been taught about evolution and the survival of the fittest. For this man, strong as he was, reached down to save the weak. Eiseley wondered if there was a star-thrower at work in the universe, a God who contradicts death, a God whose nature is mercy itself.

During this season of Lent, our focus is on the Cross. This cross is one of the ways that human beings said "No" to life. And yet, through the cross of Jesus, God says a resounding "YES" to life. Through this cross of Jesus, God reaches down to save us from ourselves. Through this cross of Jesus, God rescues us from certain death—he hurls us back into the fullness of life. And he invites us to take up our crosses and follow him—to become star throwers ourselves, cherishing life for all people. Through the cross of Jesus, God invites us to join our voices with his in a resounding "Yes" to life. Who do you know who needs to feel the love and hope that God gives us through Jesus? Be a Star Thrower and rescue them by sharing the Good News that Jesus Saves!

Have a blessed Lenten and Easter season,

- Barb Jernigan



Jesus said, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself." (MATTHEW 28:18-20 NIV)

Congratulations....

to James and Christine Cathcart
on the baptism of their son
Liam Nicholas Cathcart
on February 13, 2005.



Friday April 15 - Scholarship Applications Due - Application are now available in Fellowship Hall and in the church office for anyone interested in applying for a scholarship. A new scholarship fund has been established this year in memory of Ruth Romkey. This scholarship is for someone who is interested in studying in the medical field. This includes nursing and other medical related fields.

Roof Fund - A planning meeting for discussing a June 18th chicken bar-b-cue and family fun day, will be held after church on March 6th near the stage. Details on page 5.



March 20th is officially Spring!



March 17th

The Women of the Bible study group is meeting on Thursdays from 7:00 - 8:30 pm on March 3,10,17. All are welcome!

Lenten BIBLE STUDY

Please keep your fellow parishioners in your prayers as there has been a lot of illness recently. Please pray for Russell Romkey as he recovers from hip replacement surgery; for Ellen Beauvais; for Barbara Niles as she goes in for testing; for Gordon Battye as he recovers from surgery; for Gloria Rose as she recovers from a foot injury; and for Audrey Arnold as she under goes chemo treatments. May the Lord strengthen you and comfort you during this time.



Our Sympathies...to the family and friends of Sadie Stewart who passed on February 7, 2005. Also to Ted and Ellen Beauvais on the passing of their son-in-law Les Downer.

The Bulletin Board

- March 4 World Day of Prayer
- March 6 Girl Scout Sunday & One Great Hour of Sharing
- March 13 Amistad Sunday
- March 14 Easter flower orders due
- March 17 St. Patrick's Day
- March 19 Roast beef supper 5PM

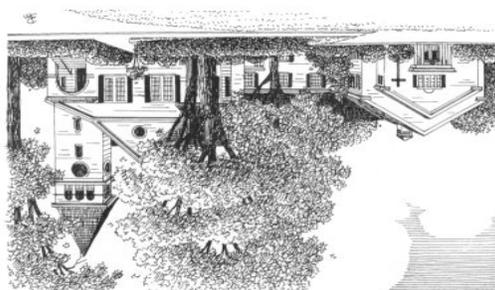
- March 20 Beginning of Holy Week - Palm Sunday
- March 24 Maundy Thursday Service 7 PM
- March 25 Good Friday, church open from 1-3
- March 26 Holy Saturday
- March 27 Easter Sunday (Sunrise Service 6 AM)
9 AM Service and 10:30 AM Service

- April 1 Pinewood derby, 6 PM in Fellowship Hall



This list does not include weekly reoccurring meetings. All meetings are listed on the calendar insert. Please notify the church secretary immediately if something is *not* listed on the calendar. 508-832-2845.

TIDINGS is a monthly publication of
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