

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF VERNON, UCC

~ Fourth Sunday in Lent ~

One Great Hour of Sharing Offering

Holy Communion

February 28, 2016

WELCOME!

If you have thirst, our love will quench it. If you are lonely, our hope will be your company. If you are hungry, God's peace and joy will fill you and feed you.

(~Peter, 8 yrs. old)

Or, if you've come here today without food in your belly,

We can provide you with a meal.

(Please see one of our Pastors.)

PRELUDE	"Fantaisie"	Franck
	"Communion"	Auber
	"Poor Wayfaring Stranger"	arr. Hughes
	"The Church In the Wildwood"	arr. Miles

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOMING the LIGHT of CHRIST

***CALL to WORSHIP** Lisa Moore

(middle section written by Rev. Nadia Bolz-Weber)

Leader: Jesus' message is that there's a place for everyone – baby, child, teen, young adult, middle adult, older adult,

People: the poor in spirit: the kids who sit alone at middle-school lunch tables, the laundry guys at the hospital.

Leader: Jesus came for those who mourn: blessed are the mothers of the miscarried.

People: He comes for the meek: blessed are the forgotten, the closeted, the unemployed;

Leader: and for foster kids and trophy kids and special ed kids and every other kid who just wants to feel safe and loved and never does.

People: The message is for the merciful: the burnt-out social workers and the overworked teachers and pro-bono case takers;

Leader: and the kids who step between the bullies and the weak. Blessed are those who delete hurtful, hateful, homophobic comments off their friends Facebook page.

People: Jesus comes again for we who are gay, straight, people of color, white, disabled, special needs, homeless,

Leader: doubters, believers, wounded, secure, or a little bit of each.

ALL: THAT'S THE REALM OF GOD, AND YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

***OPENING HYMN #284 "Gather Us In"**

LENTEN WREATH LITURGY Kurt and Gaile Dembeck

Reader 1: It's Sunday morning. Last week with all its demands, is over.

The coming week, with yet another round of challenges and demands, is not quite here. I invite you to close your eyes and be fully present in this moment. No matter where you are in your thoughts and feelings, I encourage you to set all that aside and consider where you are right now.

Reader 2: Whatever is true for you today – whether it be joy or sadness, gratitude or anxiety – let it come to the front of your mind in this moment. Then listen... for God is present in these moments, too. God meets you where you are and calls you forward, breath by breath, guiding you slowly but surely toward transformation.

(Silent time.)

Reader 1: As we extinguish this light, we acknowledge the darkness and pain caused by poverty and the lack of basic needs like food, shelter, healthcare and love.

(A candle is extinguished.)

All: Loving God, we thank you that you are with us, and that we may call upon you no matter where we are or what we are feeling. Keep us mindful of your presence and trusting in your promise – that you are working with us in the moment-by-moment unfolding of our lives. Amen.

***GLORIA PATRI**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

All are welcome to receive communion.

INVITATION

PRAYER of BLESSING/The LORD'S PRAYER *(unison)*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

WE REMEMBER (recalling Jesus' words and actions at the Last Supper)

SHARING the BREAD and the CUP (served in the pew; gluten-free bread is available. Please indicate your preference to a Deacon. We will receive the elements when all are served.)

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (unison)

For the healing you have given us in the brokenness of bread and the pouring out of cup, we thank you. For the community that you have restored in us through the sharing of life, we thank you. For the courage and strength that you have promised to us, we thank you. Send us forth from this place in love, letting justice be worked out with gentleness and power known in the presence of your Spirit. Amen.

(All children are invited downstairs for Sunday School.)

NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE The Gospel of Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32 (p. 78)

SERMON "Father" Rev. Suzanne Personette

SHARING of JOYS and CONCERNS

MORNING PRAYER

PRAYER RESPONSE

CALL to REGULAR OFFERING and One Great Hour of Sharing Offering

OFFERTORY "How Beautiful" Twila Paris

***DOXOLOGY**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***PRAYER of DEDICATION** (unison)

Thank you, O God, for loving us and laboring with us as we seek you and as we help others in their seeking. Bless these offerings which we return to you, that in our seeking and our serving, we may help others to feel the embrace of your and our wide welcome. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN** #557 "Just a Closer Walk with Thee"

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE "Postlude" Handel

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon us, because he has anointed us to bring **good news** to the poor. He has sent us to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.*

~based on Luke 4:18-19

***All who are able are invited to stand.**

Join us for coffee and conversation after the service in Fellowship Hall.

The flowers by the Communion Table are given in memory of my loving husband, Russ Kunz from Chris Kunz.

The flowers on the Marbeltop Table are given to honor and thank our Historian, Lynn Sweet, especially for the Carillon articles about our church history that she has written over the past few months.

In Our Ongoing Prayers

Helen Lane, Nancy Bright's mother, in hospice care; the **family and friends of Barbara Sheridan** (FCCV member) on her death; **Emma**, Glory Hockenberry's friend; **Joyce Smith; Michele**, daughter of Althea Madigan's cousin, for healing, and prayers for her doctors; Collette, daughter of Sarah Summers, healing from RSV; Brian, 11 years old, fighting bone cancer; Meg (Bill and Holly Boutwell's sister and sister-in-law) on the aggressive return of a tumor; the homeless; the hungry; Linda Vogt, friend of Marilyn Newton, diagnosed with kidney cancer; Linda Rentler; gun reform; acceptance of religious diversity/skin color/sexual orientation; Terri Karr; Daniel Burnett-Pollack; Debbie Chase; Dick Myer; Margaret Klukas; Gilmay Markunas and family; Paul Westerberg; people struggling with mental illness, and their families; the people of Syria, including the family of Tarek Eid; Heidi Howie; Mason Bower; Michael Turner; Martha Fowler; Michael Bebrin; Cooper Doyle *New additions in **bold print***

~ANNOUNCEMENTS~

Greet your neighbor with a hug or handshake, whichever is most comfortable for the two of you.

March 13, 2016 - We will enjoy our Easter Cantata next Sunday, presented by our Sanctuary Choir, and Choir Director Leanne Connolly and Organist James Burr! We will also baptize Hayden Cima! Make sure to spring your clock forward the night before so you don't miss worship!

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, March 13

in Fellowship Hall following the Worship Service to hear and act upon the staff configuration as recommended by Church Council and the 2016 budget extension as discussed at the January Annual Fiscal Meeting.

++In an effort to keep the Sabbath holy, we would like to refrain from talking with church leaders about church business before or after worship. If you need to speak with someone, please contact them late in the day or in the coming week.++

The **One Great Hour of Sharing** offering will be collected today. It benefits individuals and communities around the world who suffer the effects of disaster, conflict or severe economic hardship. If you would like to donate, please make your check out to FCCV with "OGHS" in the memo and place it in the special offering envelope included in today's bulletin. Thank you!

Deacons assisting with Communion: Cheryl Purnell, Marilyn Newton, Bill Duncan, Jim Wilson, Judy Ramsdell

If you would like to become a member of FCCV, please speak with Rev. Robin, Rev. Suz or one of our Deacons. We'd like to schedule a New Member Class soon, as well as a New Member Sunday in which we receive new members!

TODAY DURING COFFEE HOUR downstairs in Fellowship Hall

The Flower Committee is taking **orders** for **lilies** and **daffodils** that will be displayed in the Sanctuary on Easter.

Name Tags: If you ordered one, you can pick it up today from the Scrip-Your-All table. If you'd like to order one, three options are available – magnet, pin or clip. You can also include a hang tag should you belong to a board/committee. A \$3 to \$5 donation is requested, but not required. Order today or contact Kate Fowler at kfowler64@yahoo.com.

The J*Walkrz are taking orders for **FCCV sweatshirts** and **polos** (\$25 each) and **tee shirts** in green or gray (\$20). They are also selling **FCCV pens** for only \$1. Proceeds will help us attend the National Youth Event in July.

Please Note: For those of you following the "Historical Notes" in our monthly Carillon, the Bulletin Board in Fellowship Hall (on top of the glass cabinet at the entrance to the stairwell) has been changed. Take a look at pictures of the bell and steeple being put in place! If you've missed notes on the rebuilding of our sanctuary, you can check the Carillon Archive on our website...or ask Lynn Sweet (Lynn4447@aol.com or 860.875.3172) about getting copies.

TODAY'S ACTIVITIES

Junior Choir Rehearsal: 11:30 AM, PF Room

Board of Music: 11:30 AM, Library

J*Walkrz: 3:30 PM, Fellowship Hall

Agape Dinner

Today at 5 PM in Fellowship Hall

Dinner will be provided and served by the Deacons. The elements of the Jewish Passover meal, the Seder, are offered to taste and will be explained by our student, Barb Hesse. There will be a game for the children before dinner. There is no charge but please bring a non-perishable food item for the pantry/soup kitchen.

All are welcome!

Please sign up on the sheet posted in Fellowship Hall.

THIS WEEK'S ACTIVITIES

Bible Study: Monday, March 7, 11 AM, Library

Women's Fellowship/Evening Circle: Monday, March 7, 7 PM, Fellowship Hall. Game Night and Root Beer Social – all women are invited to join us.

Men's Breakfast Group: Tuesday, March 8, 6:30 AM, Vernon Diner

Prayer Shawl: Tuesday, March 8, 1 PM, Library

Deacons: Tuesday, March 8, 7 PM, Library

Theology on Tap: Thursday, March 10, 6 PM, Mitchell's Restaurant

Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal: Thursday, March 10, 7:30 PM, Sanctuary

Support Group: Friday, March 11, 10:30 AM, Library

Bible Study: Friday, March 11, 6:30 PM, Library

Choir Rehearsal: Saturday, March 12, 9:30 AM, Sanctuary

Missions: Saturday, March 12, 10 AM, Library

Daylight Saving Time Begins Sunday, March 13. Don't forget to turn your clocks ahead 1 hour.

Scrip-Your-All Help Wanted! Are you looking for a way to get more involved at FCCV? Consider helping out at the Scrip-Your-All table. Volunteers are needed to man the Scrip-Your-All table during Coffee Hour from 11 AM-noon (once a month or once a quarter - your choice!). You'll be teamed with an experienced Scrip-Your-All volunteer. If interested, stop by the Scrip-Your-All table or contact Kate Fowler at 860-614-9747 or kfowler64@yahoo.com.

Please Note: To request a visit with one of the pastors, please contact the Church Office at 860-875-7580.

Help Needed! Ten youth, college students and adults are attending the UCC National Youth Event in Florida this summer. This event happens every four years and includes workshops, service projects, a day at Disney and, most importantly, worship with UCC youth from all over our nation and the world! As you can imagine, it's quite expensive – with the plane flight and Conference it costs \$909 per person. We have been fundraising up a storm for two years with tag sales, pen and t-shirt sales and Family Night Out but **we still need help**. Please consider a donation to help us attend and represent Connecticut. If you'd like to donate "in memory" or in "honor" of someone specific, please let Debi Hockenberry know when you write your check. Your name will be included in the bulletin on Youth Sunday in September when we tell you all about our trip! Thank you!

FCCV Fun-Filled Festival, Sunday, May 22, 2 PM, Fellowship Hall

This fundraiser for the Les Childs Scholarship, sponsored by the Board of Music and Leanne Connolly, will offer light snacks and finger foods while our FCCV family and friends present their talents for us to enjoy.

Members and friends (all ages), including their talented pets, are invited to share their talents (singing, playing an instrument, reading, telling jokes, dancing, etc.). If you wish to participate or have any questions, please contact Leanne at lconnolly1825@gmail.com or 860-462-4694.

The **R. Leslie Childs Memorial Scholarship** is a \$500 scholarship awarded each year to an FCCV church member or child of a member to provide assistance with musical training. The award can be used for music lessons, music education or toward the purchase of a musical instrument. An application must be completed and submitted to the Board of Music no later than April 15. Applications may be picked up in the Church Office. Questions? Contact any Board of Music member.

The youth will be having a **Tag Sale** on April 23. Donations may be dropped off the week of the 23rd. Please keep us in mind while doing your spring cleaning! Thank you!

Needed! Our shopping carts (located in the Narthex and Breezeway) are running low. Each month Board of Missions members alternate taking non-perishable food to the Soup Kitchen in Rockville and to the Hockanum Valley Community Council. Folks are also need to help prepare meals at the Soup Kitchen. A sign-up sheet is posted in fellowship Hall.

Pairs and Spares Upcoming Events

Sunday, March 20, 2 PM - The Ten Commandments shown on the big screen at Rave Theater, Buckland Hills. Cost - \$8.50. Open to all - pairs, spares, kids, teens, families. If interested in attending, stop by the Scrip-Your-All table during Coffee Hour. Remember to use your Rave gift card (available at the Scrip-Your-All table.)

Saturday, April 16, 4:30-7:30 PM in Fellowship Hall - **Paint, Sip, Fun.** Cost - \$30. Paint and create your own work of art. Sign-up during Coffee Hour or online at paintsipfun.com (click on April 16 and our event).

Evening Circle is **collecting items for a Center Road family.** Items needed are pull-ups for a 4-year-old boy, winter boots for a 6-year-old girl, mittens for all three children aged 4 (boy), 6 and 9 (girls), any food items, children's toiletries (shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, toothbrush)) and gift cards for Target or Walmart.

LENTEN *Schedule*

The **Lenten Series**, led by our seminarian, Barbara Hesse, is based on the movie "Conversations with God." The series continues on **Fridays, March 11 and 18** at 6:30 PM in the Library. Dessert and beverages will be served at all sessions and childcare will be available.

Agape Dinner, Today, March 6 at 5 PM in Fellowship Hall

Easter Cantata, Sunday, March 13 during the Worship Service

Palm Sunday, March 20

Maundy Thursday Service, March 24, 7 PM in the Sanctuary

Easter Sunrise Service, Sunday, March 27, 6:30 AM in the Memorial Garden

Easter Worship Service, Sunday March 27, 10 AM in the Sanctuary