

The Spire

The Newsletter of the Wollaston Congregational Church, United Church of Christ



Pastor's Page

March 2010

Dear friends,

We began the Lenten season once again with a Pancake Supper on Shrove Tuesday. Children and adults enjoyed the dinner, as well as the traditional "pancake toss" game, won by Clare Doherty and Ryan Messing. We moved outdoors to burn our palms from last year and make them into ash for our Ash Wednesday service the next night.



Now that we have entered Lent, I wonder what kind of "fast" you will take up as you follow Jesus to the cross during this season, which will bring us into Holy Week and to Easter. Will you give something up that you enjoy during this time of reflection and self-denial? Or maybe you will take on a Lenten discipline that will bring you to a closer walk with Jesus?

Here is a suggestion I found in the Patriot Ledger last Saturday. "The Christian Relief and Development Agency, Tearfund" is encouraging a "Carbon Fast" for Christians as they begin lent." A carbon fast can help us to face global issues. Consider the following earth-friendly actions that you can adopt and continue even when Lent is over.

- Have a technology fast: Spend a day without your TV, MP3 player, computer, and cell phone...
- Eat by candlelight.
- Go vegetarian.
- Curtail your purchases. Repair clothes instead of buying new ones.
- Pledge to walk or take public transportation instead of driving.

Peace to you in this Lenten time of reflection.

Rev. Dr. Mary Louise Gifford



From Leanne Walt

Dear Friends,

We are descendants of a pilgrimage tradition. We follow in the footsteps of Abraham, who left his home in search of God's Promised Land, and the Israelites, who ventured through the wilderness to the land of Canaan. We walk in the ways of Ruth, who journeyed from her home in Moab to settle in Bethlehem. Jesus called the fishermen Simon, Peter, Andrew, James, and John to leave their nets and follow him. Jesus urges Matthew the tax collector to leave his booth and follow him. Through our ancestors' stories, we learn that physical journeys can hold deep spiritual meaning.

In these weeks, Jesus calls us to walk with him to the cross. Like the disciples who gathered in the upper room the night before Jesus was arrested, each Sunday during Lent we prepare the communion meal and we journey to the table confessing our sins. We accompany Jesus into the garden of Gethsemane and, though the night is drawing on and the darkness is caving in, we stay awake to pray with him. Some of us may chose to give something up during Lent and others may chose to take something on as we walk with Jesus, all with the hope that we will more fully experience the joy of his resurrection.

We do all of this during our Lenten pilgrimage so that as we approach the cross, we might see before us a window into our own faith and a window into suffering in the world. How we make the journey determines what we experience when we get to our destination and what we will see as we peer through the window of the cross. Come Easter morning, what will you, as a follower of Christ, see as you look to the cross? What will we, as a community of faith, see in the cross when the promise of new life dawns among us?

Peace, Leanne

The Alleluia Box



On Sunday, February 14, during a children's sermon delivered by Dr. Gifford, the children packed away the "alleluias" that we've been singing and saying in church.

This "Alleluia Box" was hidden by the children, and will be brought out on Easter when we celebrate the miracle of Jesus' Resurrection.



Church School

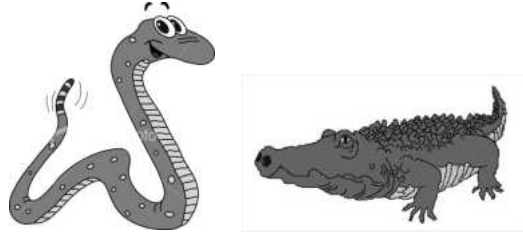
In March, we return to the Rock Solid curriculum and the children will be creating four different Lenten symbols to help them remember Jesus. As always, during each class this month, the children will be hearing Bible stories or reading Bible verses.

In the K-2 class, the symbols each child will create include an egg to represent new life; Temple coins to remind us of what Jesus witnessed when he arrived at the Temple; a communion cup to represent the new way Jesus gave his disciples to remember him; and Palm Sunday donkeys.

In the class for grades 4-6, to help reinforce the Bible verses they will be reading and discussing, the children will also make symbols to help them remember - a chalice to remember Jesus' last meal with his disciples; a pretzel, a symbol of prayer; a nail cross to remind them of the suffering Jesus experienced on the cross; and a palm branch for Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem.

There will be a special Easter symbol both the classes will make and these will be displayed during Easter Worship Service.

Upcoming Family Fun at WollyCong



Join us on Friday night, March 26th at 6:00 PM when the group from *Curious Creatures* will entertain and educate us about a variety of animals we don't usually see so up close and personal! This is a free community event, and all children must be accompanied by an adult.

Save the Date

Saturday, April 3rd



Wolly Cong's

Easter Egg Hunt

(plus more surprises and fun)

More details coming soon

Hope you can join us!

Meet the Messing Family

Meet the Messing family, Tim, Brooke, Ryan, and Lisa. Lisa grew up here at Wollaston Cong. She fondly remembers Sunday school lessons with Chuck Wiot, and also having fun at the church dances during her youth. After recently selling their home in Bridgewater, the Messings have returned to Wollaston and rejoined our church.



Lisa (Butland) Messing is a part of her family's four generations of women at Wollaston Cong. Her grandmother is Jessie Butland; her mother is Charlotte, and her aunt is Susan Hilton, who all attended our church; and now she and her daughter, Brooke are here, along with husband Tim and son Ryan.

While their children attend schools in Wollaston, the Messings are involved in two business endeavors. Lisa's dessert baking has already been displayed at the Church Fair with great cupcakes. And I can personally attest to her Travel Agency, "Cruise Planners" in that she got Mark and I a great deal on our trip to St. Thomas.



If you are planning a birthday party, a bridal shower, or a special anniversary party, consider asking Lisa to bake something very special. Or if you are planning a trip somewhere local or abroad, talk to Lisa. She'll be glad to help you out. You can reach Lisa and Tim at lisaandtimm@comcast.net or 617-750-6420. Or you can visit their website at www.bookmytripnow.com.

E-giving at WollyCong

In an effort to help members and friends of the church with their giving, we can now offer you the option of having your pledge dollars deducted directly from your checking account. If you'd like to sign up for this service, please see Marian Channon, Collector.



The Spire is a monthly publication of the Wollaston Congregational Church, United Church of Christ. Copies are available in the narthex.

The deadline for the April newsletter is March 20 at noon. Submissions should be e-mailed to wollastonadmin@comcast.net, or delivered to Peter Johnston in the church office. Articles may be edited for content and length.



Notes of Thanks

FROM CHRISTMAS GIFT
RECIPIENTS

I would like to thank you so much for those wonderful gifts. God bless you a million times for the holiday. Have a nice Christmas and a happy New Year.

I just wanted to say thank you for helping us with Christmas. I means everything to me and my children that we can have a wonderful Christmas.

Women's Prayer Breakfast

Saturday, March 13

For the past 12 years women of faith from across the South Shore have gathered each spring for a wonderful morning of prayer, music, and fellowship. Our guest speaker is Linda Erickson, former regional President for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saint's Relief Society. She will address this year's theme of "Women Making a Difference through Faith, Hope and Charity."

The event takes place at St. Ann's Social Hall. Registration begins at 8:30am and breakfast is served at 9:00 am.

Breakfast will include: eggs, homefries, sausages, ham, Danishes, bagels, muffins, croissants, juice, coffee and tea.

Cost per ticket is \$12 For tickets Please speak with Peg Sandahl Seating is limited
Ticket deadline - March 5th



Recently in the historical section of the Patriot Ledger, the above picture of the Fuller twins, John and Buell, was shown. They had received the highest honor conferred by the Boy Scouts of America, the Silver Beaver Award.

John and Buell were the first Boy Scout Leaders in the United States to lead a pack of boys with special needs. On Tuesday nights, the pack met in the Social Hall. The Fullers spent many hours helping the boys achieve their badges, and at least two of the young men received their Eagle badge.

The Fullers were long-term members of our church and served on many committees such as the Deacons, Board of Trustees, Executive Committee and Mission/Action Committee.

One of them was a licensed auctioneer, and led our church auctions. They very generously donated many of their personal antiques to the auctions.

They were also puppeteers, and I can remember many fair days when they put on puppet shows and organized children's games in the Parish Hall. The children had a wonderful time! -Peg Sandahl



From the Moderator

If you were not at worship on Valentine's Day you missed a special mission moment. So, to keep you up to date on WCC missions, I wanted to tell you about Sunday's service that day.

First, it was a holiday weekend. We had 47 adults and 10 children at church! That's the highest number of people in church for a holiday weekend in recent years at WCC. Of course, 5 of them were related to Leanne Walt, our Pastoral Resident, who preached her best sermon yet.

The exciting mission moment came when we invited people to come forward and fill Kendra Donovan's suitcase for her mission trip on the 20th to help out at an orphanage in Haiti. The suitcase was more than **OVERFLOWING!** Mission is indeed alive and growing at WCC.

Along the same line, the church has sent \$1150 to the UCC offices for our offerings to Haiti relief. And we have more than \$200 more received since then. Again, another indication we are growing in the right direction!

-Marian Channon, Moderator



So, Why Pancakes?

Shrove Tuesday is a term associated with the day preceding Ash Wednesday, the first day of the season of fasting and prayer called Lent.

The word shrove is the past tense of the English verb shrive, which means to obtain absolution for one's sins by way of confession and doing penance. During the week before Lent, Christians were expected to go to confession in preparation for the penitential season of turning to God. Shrove Tuesday was the last day before the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday, and noted in histories dating back to 1000 AD.

The popular celebratory aspect of the day had developed long before the Protestant Reformation, and was associated with releasing high spirits before the somber season of Lent. It is analogous to the continuing Carnival tradition associated with Mardi Gras (and its various names in different countries) that continued separately in European Catholic countries.

In the United Kingdom and many other countries, the day is often known as Pancake Day. Making and eating such foods was considered a last feast with ingredients such as sugar, fat and eggs, the consumption which was traditionally restricted during the ritual fasting associated with Lent.



CHURCH WORLD SERVICE

Haitian Medevac Cases: role of faith communities and local volunteers

As of 2/11/10, medevac cases from Haiti are arriving or slated to arrive in the following metropolitan areas: Miami, Tampa, Atlanta, Philadelphia, Newark, New York City and Boston. Upon entering the United States, these cases are given humanitarian parole and quickly flown to receiving hospitals in the designated communities. Many cases include an accompanier from Haiti, most often a close relative.

Church World Service (CWS) and its partners are now receiving these cases. The seriousness of the injuries seen thus far will require a vast network of support in the cities of placement. Faith communities and volunteers are an integral part of this network of support.

Local organizations, such as faith groups and voluntary organizations in the community are invited to make at least a three-month commitment to assist medevacs with any of the following:

- Transportation to the hospital and to appointments
- Providing funds for housing and food for the accompanier(s)
- Providing funds for housing and food for the hospitalized individual upon release
- Furnishing hygiene kits
- Providing necessary clothing and footwear
- Translation
- Cultural orientation
- Emotional support
- Coordinate efforts with local CWS office or partner

The emphasis of this volunteer effort is to provide support for the hospitalized individual and those who are accompanying. Volunteers and faith communities are not responsible for the medical costs related to the medevac. Humanitarian parole status ensures that these individuals are eligible for assistance from government social service agencies.

Some of the cases may eventually return home to Haiti, be resettled in other U.S. cities, or join relatives in the United States. Our role now is to provide the support necessary during their treatment for the injuries sustained in the earthquake.

Faith communities and volunteers who are interested in supporting Haitian Medevac cases should call Church World Service (212) 870-3300.

LENTEN SERMONS

Sunday, March 7, Third Sunday in Lent

Isiah 55: 1-9, Luke 13: 1-9

“Another Year” Dr. Gifford,

March 14, Fourth Sunday in Lent

Joshua 5: 9-12 Like 15: 1-3; 11b-32

“God Gets Angry, Too” Leanne Walt

March 21, Fifth Sunday in Lent

Isaiah 43: 16-21, John 12: 1-8

“Infinite Love of God” Dr. Gifford

March 28, Palm Sunday

Isaiah 50: 4-9a, Luke 19: 28-40

“Two Sides to Every Story”

Leanne Walt

Thursday, April 1 Maundy Thursday at

7:00pm

Board of Deacons

April 4 Easter Sunday

Exodus 12: 1-4 (5-10), 11-14,

John 13: 1-17, 31b-35

“Reconciling Love” Dr. Gifford