



The Link



First Congregational Church of Stoughton, United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation

April 2019

Our Vision

*We are called together to embrace God's transformation of our lives and our world
by becoming and serving as Christ's disciples.*



Dear Friends,

As I prepared to write this month's message from the pastor, I wondered what topic would be most helpful to explore through the lens of our Christian faith. The unspeakable violence of the attacks on our Muslim sisters and brothers in Christchurch, New Zealand? Or perhaps the concept of the frailty of life that was reinforced by the recent crash of the Ethiopian jet? Or maybe I should comment on the sadness I feel knowing that several people in my life are struggling with illness and loss? I think it's safe to say that these topics are also ones that resonate with you, and each of them is worthy of our consideration.

After some reflection, however, I felt compelled to paraphrase for you something a mentor of mine once said: We all know what we should do as people of faith. We should decry violence in all its forms. We should lament the loss of innocent lives. We should not stand idly by when people are victimized because of their religious beliefs. We should comfort those who are suffering. We all know what we should do. But what bears exploring is who is the God who is asking us to do these things?

Growing in our intimacy with God is one of the gifts of Lent. The season invites us to slow down from the rapid pace to which many of us are accustomed and to pray and listen to Christ as he shows the magnitude of his love by giving his life for us. Certainly, we should care about the needs of our friends and families, our communities, and the world. But I believe we must prioritize our relationship with God before we can be effective in our service to others. It is when we sink our spiritual roots deep into God's love that we are then nourished, guided, and equipped to bring healing to those around us.

continued

Perhaps during this holy season you are using the contents of “Lent in a Bag” during a quiet moment in your day. Maybe you are setting aside time to read through one of the gospels this month or are being more intentional about your prayer life. Whatever it may be, I pray that we all will come to know Christ in a deeper way this Lent and will be renewed in our desire to follow him and to bring his good news to the world.

Lenten blessings,

Pastor Mary



This month we extend our gratitude to **Ed and Gale Porter** for sprucing up inside the church and to **Marcia Olson** and our Confirmation students, **Riley O’Connell, Ashlyn O’Connell, and Colleen Cesario** for the many hours they spent organizing the Bags of Hope event. We are very blessed!



Please Be Considerate Where You Park

Due to the limited number of spaces in our parking lot, we have signs that say, “*Reserved for Those Requiring Proximity Parking,*” and ask that you leave these for individuals who can only walk short distances. We ask all people who are physically able to consider parking in one of the spots in front of the park on Pierce Street. This frees up spots in the lot for those who really need to park closer to the entrance. Also, we ask you to remember not to park in any spot that has a “No Parking” sign, or in the Fire Lanes. Thank you for your cooperation.



It will soon be time to start planning our community garden and everyone is invited to help out – new gardeners and seasoned ones too. Look for more details in Notes & Notices. We will talk about what worked last year and what we’d like to improve on. What is your vision for our 2019 Community Garden? To be kept up to date on planning for our garden and the dates that we will meet, send an email to Lindsey Medeiros (medeiros.lindsey@gmail.com) or Marcia Olson (baglole.olson@verizon.net)



SPECIAL BOTTLE AND CAN FUNDRAISER

There will be a bottle and can drive in conjunction with our upcoming Yard Sale on **Saturday, April 13 from 9:00 AM– 1:00 PM.**

Please save your redeemable bottles and cans and bring them to the church that day to donate before you do your shopping or volunteering at the event.

If you prefer, items can be dropped off anytime in the blue bin inside the church at the bottom of the stairs opposite the church office. Monetary donations are also gratefully accepted.

Many thanks to Maurine Upton for spearheading this effort. The money collected is used for various church ministries and operational needs.

Thank you in advance!



BOSTON UNIVERSITY GUEST PREACHER

Our church has been involved as a partner in seminary education for many years, offering hands on experience to seminarians at Andover Newton Theological School until its relocation to New Haven last year. We now have a new partnership with the Boston University School of Theology and will be available to serve as a teaching parish for their students. B.U. has a tradition of offering faculty and staff as resources to local churches each year, so on **Sunday, April 7, Dr. Nicolette Manglos-Weber** will join us for worship and will be preaching. Dr. Manglos-Weber is a sociologist, writer, and teacher, and Assistant Professor of Religion and Society at B.U. Please give her a warm UCC Stoughton welcome!



Fill A Bag for UCC Stoughton

Goal: \$800

Event Dates: Now - April 13, 2019

Collection location during drive: First Congregational Church of Stoughton, 76 Pierce Street, Stoughton

Help support the ministries of the First Congregational Church of Stoughton by donating your gently used clothing, accessories, and linens during our spring [FUNDrive](#). Start your spring cleaning by filling up 33-gallon bags and dropping them off at the church between now and April 13. Bags can be dropped off on **Saturday, April 13 between 9 AM - 1 PM** during our church yard sale or on any Sunday morning. Contact Marcia Olson at baglole.olson@verizon.net or at 781-344-9547 to arrange for a different drop off time or a pick up.



Spring Linen Drive

The Evelyn House Women's and Children's Shelter in Stoughton is in need of **new linens** to replenish their supplies. We are collecting pillows, pillow protectors, pillow cases, twin-size sheets (flat and fitted), twin blankets and comforters, baby afghans, crib sheets and blankets, and all sizes of towels. Please bring your donations to the Giving Corner located in the church lobby. Your generosity is greatly appreciated by the residents of Evelyn House and the Missions & Outreach Ministry Team. Reach out to any member (Charlene Smith, Bonnie Bittner, Ginny Gibson, Susan Hill, Dee Hayes or Rev. Mary) for more information.



CHORAL CONCERT FRIDAY APRIL 5

On Friday, April 5 at 7:00 PM, the Stoughton High School Symphonic Choir and Treble Chorale will present a concert at the First Congregational Church of Stoughton in collaboration with special guest ensembles from Balwyn High School, all the way from Australia! Each ensemble will perform a set of music and then they will join forces for one big combined piece called "Ancient City" which is an original composition by two Australian composers. This concert will be free and open to the public, so come support the SHS choral ensembles and their Australian guests!



Holy Week

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

April 14 – Palm/Passion Sunday: **10:00 AM**

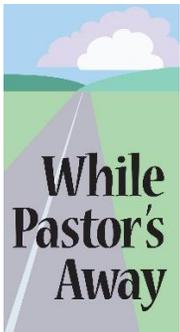
April 18 – Maundy Thursday: **7:00 PM** at First United Methodist Church

April 19 – Good Friday: **7:00 PM** Contemplative prayer service

April 21 – Easter Sunday: **10:00 AM** Celebration of the Resurrection of Christ



Please submit any Sunday worship bulletin notices to the church office by **8:30 am on Tuesday**. Articles for the **May LINK** will be due by **April 17**. Contact the church office with any changes or additions to the church calendar.



WHILE THE PASTOR'S AWAY

Pastor Mary's next scheduled week off is **April 22-28**. There will be a Hymn Sing during worship on **April 28**. Please plan to attend as we praise God through music.



What's Happening This Month?

Faith & Fellowship Opportunities

- **April 4 (Thu):** Please join Pastor Mary in the Fireplace Room at 11:45am for **Lunch with the Pastor**. Bring a brown bag lunch and she will provide beverages and dessert. This is a nice way to share what's going on in our lives. Bring a friend! All are welcome.
- **April 7 (Sun):** Church school classes - **Faith4Life class** for middle school students, led by Mr. Russ Clough will meet in the Fireplace Room just after communion. **Confirmation class** will meet in the downstairs classroom at 11:30 AM
- **April 14 (Sun): Special Needs Bible Club** presents their annual retelling of the Easter story at 4 pm in the sanctuary. Come and hear the good news and join us for light refreshments. For more information contact **Bonnie Bittner or Dottie Rother**.
- **April 22 (Mon): Women's Fellowship** will meet in the Fireplace room from 3:30-5:00 PM to enjoy an afternoon of music. Come and join us for a calming, relaxing time of fellowship. Refreshments will be provided and devotions will be led by **Peggy Webster**.
- **April 27 (Sat): "The Breakfast Club,"** a group of faithful men and women, meets on the last Saturday of every month at 9am at the IHOP at Westgate Mall in Brockton. All are welcome. If you have any questions or need a ride, contact **Bob Kuver** at 781-341-2751.
- **Project 275:** It's our church's 275th anniversary this year and we are looking for volunteers to help plan our celebration. If you are interested, please contact **Rev. Mary, John Baglole or Charlene Smith**.



Opportunities to Serve

- **April 15 (Mon): Friendly Service** meets from 10am to 2pm. We are still in need of people who can sew a few tote bags for the [Church World Service school kits](#) project. We can provide the fabric and the instructions. Come and make some at church on our sewing machines during our meeting time or take some fabric home and sew up a few as you have time. They are easy to make. We need 50 of them by the end of the month. Thank you for whatever you can do to help. Many hands make light work. Please contact **Janet Clough** at 781-344-3860 for more information.

- **April 17 (Wed): Mainspring House:** Every other month UCC Stoughton provides dinner for Brockton's homeless shelter. There are lots of ways to help. We need 2-3 volunteers to serve dinner from 3:30-6pm – it's a great way for a family or group of friends to serve together. Make a casserole – it can be made ahead, frozen and dropped off to the church the Sunday before it's our night to serve or make a monetary donation to defray the cost of salad and dessert. We are so grateful to all who faithfully volunteer to make meals or serve every time we ask – living out Jesus' most basic tenet – 'whatsoever you do for the least of these you do unto me.' Please sign up after coffee hour on Sunday or contact **Charlene Smith** (CJTS107@comcast.net | 781-254-5910).
- **Prayer Shawl Ministry:** Our group meets every Wednesday at 10am to knit prayer shawls for those who need to feel God's loving care wrapped around them. We also work on knit goods for the church fair. Don't know how to knit? We will be happy to teach you. Please join us.
- **Coffee Hour Hosts:** We all enjoy visiting with friends over a snack and a cup of coffee after worship. Please consider taking a turn hosting a coffee hour and sign up on the volunteer board to cover a Sunday.



Opportunities to

- **Bags of Hope Project:** Thanks to everyone who donated to or organized items for our Bags of Hope event hosted by the confirmation class on March 24. We were joined by several area churches and youth groups and were able to fill **100 bags** to help spread some hope to the women and girls affected by human trafficking, addiction and homelessness. A special thank you to Marilee and Frank Cantelmo from UCC Norwell and co-founders of the South Shore Interfaith Coalition Against Human Trafficking. UCC Norwell sponsored our event and guided us throughout the planning stage. For more information about this inspiring ministry go to <https://jasminegrace.org/bags-of-hope/>. LEARN about human trafficking – globally and locally. PRAY for victims of trafficking and for an end to this slavery. DEMAND slave-free products. Buy fair trade when possible. ADVOCATE for state and federal legislation that protects victims. If you suspect human trafficking, call the **National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-3737-888**.
- **Yard Sale and Clothing Drive:** A yard sale is scheduled for **Saturday, April 13** (the same day the town recreation department is hosting an Easter Egg Hunt at Halloran Park). We are also collecting gently used clothing, linens, shoes, accessories (such as belts, scarves and purses), and small household goods for a separate FUNDrive. As you do your spring cleaning, please bring your donations to the church during March. Please, no computers, computer accessories, TVs or non-working electronics. Some donations may also be given to local families in need or reserved for the church fair in the fall. If you can help or want more information, please contact **Marcia Olson** | baglole.olson@verizon.net | 781-344-9547.
- **Spring Linen Drive:** The Evelyn House Women's and Children's Shelter in Stoughton is in need of new linens to replenish their supplies. Look for details of our Spring Linen Drive elsewhere in The Link.

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- **Food Pantry:** Each month on Communion Sunday we collect non-perishable food items to share with our neighbors who are facing challenging circumstances and food insecurity at the Ilse Marks Food Pantry. As we come to the Lord's Table, let us share our blessings with others.
- **Bottles and Cans:** Please donate your clean, redeemable bottles and cans from your holiday events and parties. They can be left in the drop-off box at the bottom of the stairs just before the church office. Monetary donations are always gratefully accepted and the money collected is used for various church ministries and operational needs. Contact Maurine Upton for more information.
- **Needy Persons Fund:** Every Communion Sunday we invite you to make a special donation to this fund through which we are able to offer assistance to individuals in need. Please put your donation in the white offering envelopes found in the pews, which unless marked otherwise, will be placed in the Needy Persons' Fund. Through your generosity, we are able to help many people. *Thank you!* If you are experiencing difficult financial circumstances and could use some help through our Needy Persons' Fund, please speak to Pastor Mary in confidence.



It is time to place your dedication for a plant of lilies or tulips for our altar for Easter on April 21. Look for the order forms in the Sunday bulletin where you may specify who the plant is in memory or honor of, and the name of the donor. Can't be here on Sunday? Just mail (or drop off) your information to the church office indicating your dedication. office@uccstoughton.com We suggest a donation of \$10.00 for each plant. After the Easter service, you are welcome to take it home. Members of the Caring Committee will deliver the remaining plants to our sick and housebound members. In order to have your dedication appear in the Easter bulletin, your donation must be received by **April 14**.

ALTAR FLOWERS: If you would like to have flowers on the altar in memory of someone or in honor of a person or event, we have three open dates in April. April 7, 14 (Palm Sunday), or April 28.

For more information email the church office at office@uccstoughton.com or contact Janet Clough at 781-344-3860 | cloughjr@verizon.net



Saturday, April 13

9:00 AM – 1 PM

On the church's front lawn

Most items are \$1.00 or less!

Come find a bargain

(Rain or shine)



AT HOME, IN NURSING HOMES, AND ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES
For those who wish to send greetings, the following list is included:

Jennifer Alholm
 156 Dean Street
 South Easton, MA 02375

Wayne Alholm
 149 Homeland Drive
 Whitman, MA 02382
 (781) 523-1640

Doris Bamberg
 Copley at Stoughton Nursing Care Center
 380 Sumner Street
 Stoughton, MA 02072
 (781) 341-2300

Walter Bamberg
 2330 Central St.
 Stoughton, MA 02072

Amanda Cushing
 103 Benson Road
 Stoughton MA 02072

Fred Dimond
 382 Prospect St.
 Stoughton, MA 02072

Amy Fowler
 The Arbors
 2121 Central Street
 Room 219
 Stoughton, MA 02072

Maizie John
 Bridges by Epoch
 140 University Ave.
 Westwood, MA 02090

Betty Lambert
 19 Rose Street Unit #4
 Stoughton, MA
 (781) 436-3416

Rev. Jean Lenk
 229 Old Plymouth Road
 Sagamore Beach, MA. 02562

Dorothy Dawe
 The Arbors
 2121 Central Street
 Apt 112
 Stoughton, MA 02072
 (781) 344-8367

Muriel Rowland
 92 Cedar Hill Dr. Apt. 202
 Windsor, VT 05089

Ruth Scrivens
 18 Daly Dr.
 Stoughton, MA 02072

James Williamson
 Hellenic Nursing and Rehab Center
 601 Sherman Street
 Canton, MA 02021

April 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee Hour 1:00 PM BRC-Sanctuary/2ClassRm 3:00 PM BRC-FH/Kitchen	1 7:00 PM Rel Addiction	2 6:00 AM BRC-FR 8:30 AM N&N Deadline	3 6:00 AM BRC-FR 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl 11:45 AM Missions/Outreach 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	4 6:00 AM BRC-FR 10:30 AM Caring Committee 11:45 AM Lunch with the Pastor 7:00 PM AA 8:00 PM BRC	5 6:00 AM BRC-FR 4:30 PM Girl Scout Troop 81007 7:00 PM Choral Concert	6 6:00 AM Boston Renewal Church 11:00 AM AA
7 COMMUNION 10:00 AM Faith4Life Class 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee Hour 11:00 AM Healing Prayers 11:30 AM Confirmation Class 1:00 PM BRC-Sanctuary/2ClassRm 3:00 PM BRC-FH/Kitchen	8 7:00 PM Rel Addiction	9 6:00 AM BRC-FR 8:30 AM N&N Deadline 6:30 PM Cub Scouts	10 6:00 AM BRC-FR 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl	11 6:00 AM BRC-FR 7:00 PM AA 8:00 PM BRC	12 6:00 AM BRC-FR	13 9:00 AM Church Yard Sale 11:00 AM AA
14 PALM SUNDAY 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee Hour 11:30 AM Worship & Music 1:00 PM BRC-Sanctuary/2ClassRm 2:45 PM Special Needs Bible Club 3:00 PM BRC-FH/Kitchen 4:00 PM Special Needs Bible Club/Easter Play	15 10:00 AM Friendly Service 7:00 PM Rel Addiction	16 6:00 AM BRC-FR 8:30 AM N&N Deadline 7:00 PM Church Council	17 LINK Deadline 6:00 AM BRC-FR 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl 3:00 PM Mainspring House 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	18 MAUNDY THURSDAY 6:00 AM BRC-FR 7:00 PM AA 7:00 PM Maundy Thursday Worship at First United Methodist 8:00 PM BRC	19 GOOD FRIDAY 6:00 AM BRC-FR	20 9:00 AM FUNDrive Clothing Drive 11:00 AM AA
21 EASTER SUNDAY 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee Hour 1:00 PM BRC-Sanctuary/2ClassRm 3:00 PM BRC-FH/Kitchen	22 Pastor Mary off 3:30 PM Women's Fellowship 7:00 PM Rel Addiction	23 Pastor Mary off 6:00 AM BRC-FR 8:30 AM N&N Deadline 6:30 PM Cub Scouts	24 Pastor Mary off 6:00 AM BRC-FR 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl	25 Pastor Mary off 6:00 AM BRC-FR 7:00 PM AA 8:00 PM BRC	26 Pastor Mary off 6:00 AM BRC-FR	27 Pastor Mary off 9:00 AM Breakfast Club - (Pancake House) 11:00 AM AA
28 Pastor Mary off 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee Hour 1:00 PM BRC-Sanctuary/2ClassRm 3:00 PM BRC-FH/Kitchen	29 7:00 PM Rel Addiction	30 6:00 AM BRC-FR 8:30 AM N&N Deadline	1 6:00 AM BRC-FR 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl 11:45 AM Missions/Outreach 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	2 6:00 AM BRC-FR 10:30 AM Caring Committee 11:45 AM Lunch with the Pastor 7:00 PM AA 8:00 PM BRC	3 6:00 AM BRC-FR 4:30 PM Girl Scout Troop 81007	4 6:00 AM Boston Renewal Church 11:00 AM AA