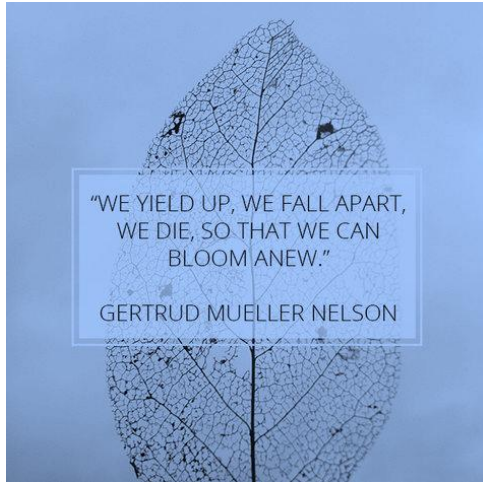


The Covenant Contact

March 2019

The Seedtime of Lent



Experiencing early spring weather, I was reminded of leaf skeletons. I find them at the bottom of my pool every spring – those decaying but beautiful leaf skeletons that are the final form of last year's leaves. They have soaked in a chlorine bath for six months and become translucent. We see some clinging to branches each winter. Transparent and fascinating. With only the

structure of the veins left, you can see the real foundation of the leaf. They will soon decay back into ground, and new things will begin to grow. The branches of the trees are still bare. The flower gardens are barren and waiting. The first hopeful sprouts will begin to peak through as the days get warmer. The time is ripe for spring, ripe for Lent.

The liturgical season of Lent coincides with spring, calling to mind the new life and growth, the hope and change, that should characterize this time of prayer, penance and conversion.

*...just as Nature renews herself every spring, so during the Church's spring we are encouraged to begin anew. We prepare for the renewal of our baptism, we suffer with Christ for our sins, we are buried with Him so that we may also arise with Him to a new life of grace and glory. (Therese Mueller, *Our Children's Year of Grace*)*

The word *Lent* is derived from an Anglo-Saxon word *lengthen* or *lencten*, meaning "spring." We are to "spring" into action, to

do the tasks of the season, to prepare for the new growth and graces that overflow from the Resurrection.

Lent is a time to challenge ourselves to choose better things – for our bodies, for our souls, and for our spirits. Joan Chittister, author of *The Liturgical Year*, says,

Lent enables us to face ourselves, to see the weak places, to touch the wounds in our own soul, and to determine to try once more to live beyond our lowest aspirations.

On Palm Sunday, the very threshold of his death and Resurrection, our Lord assured his followers that "unless the grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat. But if it dies, it produces much fruit." (John 12: 24) Let us joyfully die to self during this Lenten spring in order to become that fruitful grain of wheat.

Our life can be constantly filled with busyness, stress, and the need to be productive and efficient at all times. So this Lent, try a different strategy and pace. Be transparent to God and to others. Spend time every day in silence and stillness. Treat it as a daily break from that frantic anxiety-filled internal world. It will be inconvenient some days, but we so desperately need it.

How will you make space for new spiritual growth this Lent? Join others on the journey. Invite those seeking God to consider the claims of Christ. Pray for them, bless them; Bring them to Alpha, to church!

In Christ, Pastor Tim

Becoming Better Disciples

Join us on Sunday evenings at 5:00 p.m., in the Library. The study is "21-Day Habit." Bring your Bible. Our weekly format will be Scriptures and questions for discussion. The homework will be to begin to use the habit and to consider its application in our lives.

Lent into Easter, 2019

Ash Wednesday, March 3, 6:30 pm, Lenten Soup Supper, at First Congregational Church, Thomaston. We are invited to journey through Lent on 6 Wednesday nights with our brothers and sisters across town. The theme is “**Seeing Jesus’ death through the eyes of those who were there.**” We will not meet April 3, but will join the **Prayer Walk Friday, April 6, 6:30 pm.**

BLESS Sunday, March 10 - **Begin with Prayer:** BLESS is a new approach to prayer and evangelism. It’s less about downloading information or memorizing scripts, and more about loving our neighbors well. It helps us get “unstuck” and practice evangelism more effortlessly. BLESS is an intentional pathway for persons of all ages who follow Jesus to become like Jesus and join the mission of Jesus. BLESS is an initiative of the Evangelical Covenant Church: **Make and Deepen Disciples.**

So, we will pray for people in our life who are far from God. We will ask God, “How do you want to use me to bless the people in my life?” You will receive bookmarks on March 3 and March 10. Write down names of those who God wants you to pray for and to bless. There is a duplicate bookmark to fill out and place in the offering plate March 10.

Sundays in Lent, Holy Week & Easter

3/10	Romans 10:8b-13	Pastor Tim Olsen
	Bless Sunday: fill out names and place in offering	
3/17	Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18	Lisa Sundell Olsen
3/24	Luke 13:1-9	Pastor Gary Freimuth
3/31	Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32	Pastor Tim Olsen
4/7	John 12:1-8	Pastor Tim Olsen
4/14	Palm & Passion Sunday	Pastor Tim Olsen
4/17	Lenten Soup Supper, 6:30	First Congregational
4/18	Maundy Thursday Service, 7:00 pm (6 pm-Soup and Bread Meal)	
4/19	Good Friday Worship – Potter’s House, 7 pm	
4/21	Easter	
	6:30 am Sunrise Service , Morton’s Pond	
	10:00 am Celebration of the Resurrection	

Christian Education

Adult Sunday School class: Alpha at 9 a.m. in the Fellowship Room. Come and see what it's all about! The coffee pot will be on!

CE Bake Sale for camperships after worship on Sunday, March 17.

Campership forms are available on the Gathering Room table. They are due back by March 24.

Alpha!

The next evening series of Alpha meetings starts on Thursday, March 21, so the team is forming now. Each week needs a weekly leader, session leaders, helpers, publicity, prayer, meals (planned menus), setup, cleanup, and childcare. Contact Mary Butkevich (860 514-4343 or marybutkevich@gmail.com) if you are interested in being part of the team or Sandy Miller (sanjeanm@aol.com or 860 482-5601) to help with meals.

Men’s Thursday Night Bible Study

Our study is Pastor Randy Frazee’s *Believe – Living the Story of the Bible to Become like Jesus*. The objective is to learn what it means to think, act, and be like Jesus. We meet in the library each week, 7:00-8:30. Contact Pastor Gary (860 283-4540 or ggfremuth@optonline.net) if you want to attend or need information.

Iron Sharpens Iron

Iron Sharpens Iron, a men’s one-day equipping conference, is coming to Hartford on March 16, 8:30-4:55. This is for men of all ages (13+). Sign up in the Fellowship Room for carpooling. See www.ironsharpensiron.net for more information and to register.

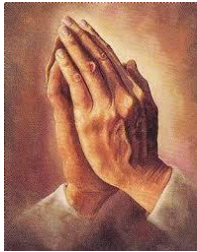
Prayer Focuses for March

• **For our government leaders and for new laws being enacted.** Pray for God to guide and for God's people to be involved in their government. (1 Timothy 2:1-3).

• **For the Potter's House ministry:** It already is a place for conversation and prayer and connecting on Friday nights. Now we are sponsoring some monthly worship time, with prayer and music. Please pray that the ministry of this dedicated space will be extended beyond the walls of this building and into the community through Christ's people, whether from this congregation or another.

• **For the Potter's House Visitors:** Pray for them to long to know God better and to keep seeking. Pray for the word to spread to those who need to hear.

• **For individuals in prison and for their families.** We are connected to a few such families. How do families manage when one is in prison? What happens when the time served is over? Pray for a clear vision of how God wants us to minister. Pray for **Kairos Prison Ministry**, which serves both prisoners and their families. Talk to Pastor Gary or Pastor Ann or go to www.kairosct.org to learn more.



• **That our hearts would overflow in generous gratitude for all God has done for us through Jesus:** The Bible does not hold back about urging us to demonstrate our faith with physical acts of service, kindness, and generosity. Pray for us to become aware of where God wants us to act and to be generous toward serving him there.

• **For the needs of the congregation:** parents with families; our children and youth, work situations and employment conditions, marriages in trouble, persons battling cancer, addictions, and other illnesses; families of those with addictions; our elderly and shut-ins;

Keeping Up



- Corrections (already!) to the new 2019 directory. Send additional corrections to cmouse@covchurchthomaston.org.
- Deb Melvin's e-mail: bdmelvin59@gmail.com
Martha Tillow's phone: 203 841-7259
Rachel Bryden's e-mail: rebryden@comcast.net
Roran Ewers' birthdate: January 6

Women Ministries



Women Ministries events are for all women of the church and their friends.

Mother/Daughter Retreat: Pilgrim pines, March 1-3. Lisa Sundell Olsen is the leader. Lindsay Johnson from Minnesota is the speaker.

Seminar: On Saturday, March 30, 1:00-3:30 p.m., an inspirational seminar by Boston social worker Eamon Anderson, "Finding Hope Through Disappointment," will be presented at church. We will have light refreshments. All women and girls from church and the community are welcome. Due to the tender nature of her story, it is suggested that the girls be 13 or older. We heard Eamon speak at Salem Covenant in October and knew we wanted her to share with us also. Come and learn how to be a resource for families who experience addiction.

Continuing Activities

1. **Stitching with Spirit:** Monday evenings at 7:00 at Karen O'Connell's (250 Reynolds Bridge, Apt. B2, Thomaston)
2. **Women's PM Study: (for women who work during the day)** Meets in the church Library every other Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. (3/5, 3/19, 4/2, 4/16, 4/30).
3. **Women's Study:** Meets on Thursday mornings at 9:30 a.m. in the Potter's House. We currently are studying "The Rock, The Road, and the Rabbi" with Cathie Lee Gifford.
4. **Women's Book Club:** Watch the weekly church bulletin for the next book to read.

Youth Groups

Pathfinders is for students in Grades 2-3. The group meets once a month. The leaders are Linda Hansen and Brenda Tousignant.

If your child wants to participate, contact Brenda (203 232-1525 or joxj269@aol.com) or Linda (860 283-9359 or lindaehansen@aol.com)



Trailblazers is for students in Grades 4-6. Trailblazers leaders are Rachel Ewers and Christie Grabherr. If you have questions, need to register your student or want to help out, contact Rachel Ewers (203 907-7052 or kyliejax@optonline.net). Sessions are 5-7 p.m.

3/3	5:00 pm	Trailblazers
3/10	5:00 pm	Trailblazers
3/17	5:00 pm	Trailblazers
3/24	5:00 pm	Trailblazers
3/31	5:00 pm	Trailblazers



D/C (Discipleship/Confirmation) is our Junior High ministry. The 7th and 8th grade students have two years of Bible and teaching, with close friendships, service projects, fun activities, and a retreat. The leaders are Pastor Tim and Vic Whaley. Sessions are 5-7 p.m.



3/3	5:00 pm	Session 16	Jesus Prepares Disciples
3/10	5:00 pm	Session 17	Pentecost
3/17	5:00 pm	Session 18	Empowered by the Spirit
3/24	5:00 pm	Session 19	Church Reaches Out
3/31	5:00 pm	Session 20	Saul, Persecutor/Proclaimer

CHYG (Covenant High Youth Group) is for all students in grades 9-12. Leaders are Lisa Olsen and Nick Samela. Sessions are 5-7 p.m.

3/3	5:00	CHYG
3/10	5:00	CHYG
3/17	5:00	CHYG
3/24	5:00	CHYG
3/31	5:00	CHYG



Missions and Evangelism

Banquet of Blessing: Please remember to keep us stocked (with good expire dates, please – we cannot give away out of date food).

Benevolence Needs: Some in our church community are struggling financially. If you are able to, please consider supporting others in need by making an extra donation to the Pastor's Benevolence Fund. Use the special envelopes in the pews or write Pastor's Benevolence Fund on your envelope or check.

Guatemala, November 2019!

Jay and Cathy Fredlund have invited us – anyone interested – to come to Guatemala and experience their missionary work. A dream team will be forming soon from throughout the United States, from Thomaston and from the area. See Pastor Tim if you are interested in going.

Potter's House



The Potter's House is open for coffee, conversation and prayer on **Friday nights, 7:00-10:00**, staffed by Peggy Steinis and Pastor Ann. A signup sheet is in the Potter's house for any who would like to share in staffing this (must be two people present always). Please share a Potter's House flyer or business card (in the Potter's House) with anyone who might want to come in.

Borrowing Church Furnishings

It seems that various items are being borrowed from the church and are not being returned. Effective immediately, the Trustees have instituted a new policy:

1. Only tables and older folding chairs may be borrowed.
2. **BEFORE** borrowing, call Rick O'Connell (860-283-8361) or Bee Bothroyd (860-309-3212). they will record how many chairs/tables you are borrowing.
3. Tables and chairs must be returned in the same (or better) condition than when they were borrowed. Tables must be washed. Chairs, if they were used outside, must be clean and free of dirt or grass.

Thank you for your help and cooperation.

March 2019 (Rev 2/24/2019)

Let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.
Hebrews 10:24, 25

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>*Sunday Schedule – 9:00 Prayer in South Wing Prayer Room; 9:00 Sunday School; 10:00 Worship; 11:00 Fellowship</p> <p>Meetings are at the church unless otherwise indicated. Stitching with Spirit is at Karen O’Connell’s (250 Reynolds Bridge Road, Apt.B2, Thomaston).</p>					<p>1</p> <p>Mother/Daughter Retreat, Pilgrim Pines</p> <p>7-10 Potter’s House Open</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Mother/Daughter Retreat</p>
<p>3* 8:30 Teacher Appreciation Breakfast 11:35 Quarterly Business Meeting Mother/Daughter retreat ends 5:00 CHYG, D/C, Trailblazers 7:00 Church Board</p>	<p>4 9:30 39ers Study (Gathering)</p> <p>6:30 Stitching with Spirit</p>	<p>5</p> <p>6:30 Prayer (Potter’s) 6:30 Women’s PM Study (Library)</p>	<p>6 ASH WEDNESDAY</p> <p>6:30 Lenten Supper, First Cong. 6:30 NA (Fellowship) 7:30 Choir</p>	<p>7 6:30 Men’s Study (Potter’s) 9:30 Women’s Bible Study (Potter’s)</p> <p>6:30 Alpha Training 7:00 Men’s Study (Library)</p>	<p>8</p> <p>7-10 Potter’s House Open</p>	<p>9</p>
<p>10* DAYLIGHT SAVINGS BEGINS LENT BEGINS</p> <p>5:00 CHYG, D/C, Trailblazers</p>	<p>11 9:30 39ers Study (Gathering)</p> <p>6:30 Stitching with Spirit</p>	<p>12</p> <p>6:30 Prayer (Potter’s)</p>	<p>13</p> <p>6:30 Lenten Supper, First Cong. 6:30 NA(Fellowship) 7:30 Choir</p>	<p>14 6:30 Men’s Study (Potter’s) 9:30 Women’s Bible Study (Potter’s)</p> <p>7:00 Men’s Study (Library)</p>	<p>15</p> <p>7-10 Potter’s House Open</p>	<p>16 8:30 Iron Sharpens Iron, Hartford Pastor Tim to Chicago 7:00 Worship & Prayer, Potter’s</p>
<p>17*</p> <p>CE Bake Sale</p> <p>Pastor Tim away</p> <p>5:00 CHYG, D/C, Trailblazers</p>	<p>18 Pastor Tim away</p> <p>10:00 La Leche League (Nursery)</p> <p>6:30 Stitching with Spirit</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Pastor Tim away</p> <p>6:30 Prayer (Potter’s) 6:30 Women’s PM Study (Library)</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Pastor Tim away</p> <p>6:30 Lenten Supper, First Cong. 6:30 NA(Fellowship) 7:30 Choir</p>	<p>21 6:30 Men’s Study (Potter’s) 9:30 Women’s Bible Study (Potter’s) Pastor Tim returns</p> <p>6:30 Alpha 6:30 Grief Support (Gathering) 7:00 Men’s Study (Library)</p>	<p>22</p> <p>7-10 Potter’s House Open</p>	<p>23</p> <p>9:30 Soup Kitchen Team, Torrington</p>
<p>24*</p> <p>5:00 CHYG, D/C, Trailblazers</p>	<p>25 9:30 39ers Study (Gathering)</p> <p>6:30 Stitching with Spirit</p>	<p>26</p> <p>6:30 Prayer (Potter’s)</p>	<p>27</p> <p>6:30 Lenten Supper, First Cong. 6:30 NA(Fellowship) 7:30 Choir</p>	<p>28 6:30 Men’s Study (Potter’s) 9:30 Women’s Bible Study (Potter’s)</p> <p>6:30 Alpha 7:00 Men’s Study (Library)</p>	<p>29</p> <p>5:00 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 7-10 Potter’s House Open</p>	<p>30 9:30 Generosity Cohort, Easton, CT 1-3:30 WM Seminar**</p>
<p>31</p> <p>5:00 CHYG, D/C, Trailblazers</p>	<p>**Women Ministries Seminar, March 30, 1:00-3:30: “Finding Hope through Disappointment” with Eamon Anderson</p>					

Volunteers: . . . through love serve one another. Galatians 5:13b

Coffee Fellowship sponsored by: Christian Education Board**

****Only beverages are needed and are provided by the church. If you provide a snack, at least one that is gluten-free, please.**

NURSERY (Ages 0-5)				ALTAR FLOWERS		LAY READERS:	
3/3	Sarah Jackson Emily Jackson	4/7	Sue Sundell Kiersten Sundell	3/3	Communion – none	3/3	Peggy Steinis
				3/10	Lori Vigeant	3/10	Susan Abbott
3/10	Denise Merrill Asher Ewers	4/14	Jamie Weisman Sarah Roaix	3/17	Linda Hansen, in memory of her father, William Lawrence	3/17	Ted Ryan
3/17	Lori Vigeant Cecelia Ewers	4/21	Gina Whaley Lauren Whaley	3/24	Ann Carr	3/24	Lisa Sundell Olsen
3/24	Patricia Vigeant Aubrey Jackson	4/28	Rachel Ewers Asher Ewers	3/31	Dave & Harriet McClay, in memory of Harriet's grandmother, Rose Kleinfeld	3/31	Gina Whaley
3/31	Faith Hull Lauren Whaley			4/7	Communion – none	4/7	Peggy Steinis
				4/14		4/14	Jessica Bedosky
				4/21	Easter Lilies	4/21	Antoinette Krasnowski
				4/28		4/28	Jane Stoddard

Sunday School Staff

Pre-K – K Cindy Olbrys, Faith Hull	3 – 4 Brenda Tousignant, Linda Hansen	7 – 12 Lisa Sundell Olsen	Adults – Ken Semeraro (Library)
1 – 2 Jane Stoddard, Peggy Steinis	5 – 6 Sandra Miller	Adults – Alpha - Mary Butkevich (Fellowship Room)	

Youth Staff

CHYG: Lisa Sundell Olsen, Nick Samela	D/C: Pastor Tim, Vic Whaley	Trailblazers: Rachel Ewers, Christie Grabherr	Pathfinders: Brenda Tousignant, Linda Hansen
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March Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays					Anniversaries		
3	Simon Dobos	10	Matt Stancavage	20	Josh Gomes	27	Rob Sanson
3	Breanna Roaix	12	Gary Merrill	20	Sarah Morton	28	Finn Hanley
4	Travis Hull	13	Rogene LaPlante	20	Patricia Vigeant	30	Declan Hanley
5	Aurelia Barker	10	Charlie Cattey	21	Rita Andreoli	30	Madison Johnson
9	Julia Bond	15	Sarah Hafele	25	George Anticoli		
9	Sarah Bryden	17	Joe Berkeley	25	Ray Bryden		
					None		

Connections:

- | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pastor Tim Olsen: pastor@covchurchthomaston.org (Study: 860 283-9146; Home 860 283-7434) ➤ Pastor of Congregational Care: Gary Freimuth (860 283-4540 or ggfreimuth@optonline.net) ➤ Pastor of Visitation: Ann Carr (860 567-9178 or aecann@optimum.net) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Church Chair: Antoinette Krasnowski: ann121959@optonline.net or 860 283-5925 ➤ Treasurer: Barbara Hanley: barbhanley@snet.net or 860 459-0561 ➤ Office "Churchmouse" Ruth Johnson: cmouse@covchurchthomaston.org (Office: 860 283-5071; Home: 860 605-8040) ➤ Prayer Chain Coordinator: Ann Carr; 860 567-9178 or aecann@optimum.net ➤ Meal Coordinator: Sandra Dunn; 860 483-2015 or daytondunn@mac.com |
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