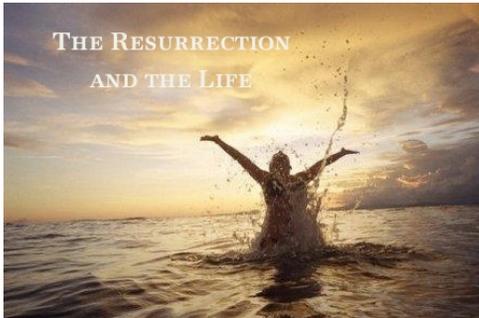


The Covenant Contact

May 2019

Resurrection is About Coming Alive!



I feel like it has been a mad dash to get to May. Holy Week into Easter had enough energy output alone. Family obligations, ministerial commitments, church life and more also made for a hectic pace. Easter came

and went; how about for you? Have you returned to some form of a “regular” routine? Did you miss out on embracing the Resurrection of Jesus Christ?

Following the Resurrection of Jesus Peter said, “I am going fishing!” The disciples returned home. They went back to fishing. They moved from the empty tomb to their boats, from the house in Jerusalem to the familiar waters of the Sea of Galilee. They returned to the same boats, the same nets, the same water, the same work. That’s when and where Jesus “showed himself.” Read the full story in John 21: 1-19.

Michael Marsh says,

Resurrection does not happen apart from the routines of life but in them. Resurrection is not about escaping life but about becoming alive.

God is always present to us! The Holy Spirit desires to fill us completely and to serve his purpose for us. Every day we have the opportunity to thrive at home, work, school, church and in all the seemingly mundane things we participate in. Do you want to come alive today and every day? Consider how and where the Lord can meet you right in the midst of your daily routine.

In John 21, Peter fished all night in the dark and came up empty. He had nothing to show for his third shift detail. Jesus even noticed saying, “You have no fish, do you?” One key

point in this story may be that Jesus showed up exactly when the nets were empty; when they were at their end. At daybreak – first light – Jesus appears; God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are fully present.

Who hasn’t experienced that darkness and emptiness? You know what that’s like. You fish, you work, you serve, you do your best but you still come up empty. It feels more like death than new life. In those times we have come to the limits of our own self-reliance. We have nothing to show for our efforts and nothing left to give. We are empty.

Nets cannot be filled unless they are first emptied. In the same way we can never be filled with the Holy Spirit until we are first emptied of ourselves, until we come to recognize the limits of our own self-sufficiency. The emptiness is not the end or a failure but a beginning. The miracle begins when there are no fish. Jesus shows up when the nets are empty.

So, what are your empty nets today? Relationships, a family crisis, work, health, finances, community involvement, serving the Lord? Don’t abandon your nets. They are the very places Jesus is showing himself to you. They will be places of resurrection – nets filled with fish. Many will believe because you have allowed God’s Spirit to meet you and fill you in your daily routine!

Let’s come alive together, Pastor Tim

If you want to find out more about the Holy Spirit, come to the Alpha Holy Spirit Retreat on May 18!

Worship and Prayer

*Second Saturday
Worship & Prayer*

Join us on the second Saturday each month for a season of praising our Lord and praying with and for each other. Next one: May 11, 7:00 p.m., in the Potter’s House

Alpha Holy Spirit Retreat

Have you ever wondered about the Holy Spirit? You have heard of the Holy Spirit, you even profess belief in the Holy Spirit when you recite the Apostles Creed, but you still may have questions. If this resonates with you, then please come to the Potter's House **Saturday, May 18**, for an exciting time of fellowship, worship, food and teaching on the Holy Spirit! We will cover such topics as:

*Who is the Holy Spirit?
What does the Holy Spirit do?
How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit?
How can I make the most of the rest of my life?*

The Potter's House will be open at 4 p.m. for appetizers and refreshments. We will have 2 sessions, a great meal, a time of praise and worship, 2 more sessions, and finish by 8 p.m. Bring your spouse, your kids, your parents, your friends, your cousin Vinny! Childcare is provided. You will not be disappointed; in fact, you will be amazed!

Church Cleanup

On **May 11**, we will clean the **inside** of the church (above and beyond what Dave and Melanie already do), starting at 9:00 a.m. Coffee and snacks will be provided both days. **MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK. PLEASE PLAN ON COMING ONE OR BOTH DAYS. WE NEED YOU!**

Guatemala, November 2019!

Jay and Cathy Fredlund have invited us – anyone interested – to come to Guatemala in November and experience their missionary work. A dream team is forming from throughout the United States, from Thomaston and from the area. **Our trip is November 8-15!** Contact Pastor Tim for more information if you are interested.



Prayer Focuses for May

• **Here's a suggestion.** When you are praying for someone, let them know rather than assuming they know. If they are grieving or feeling alone, hurt, desperate, this awareness might breathe hope and life into their situation. It could encourage them to hold on when they are tempted to give up.

• **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. **Who comes to your mind when you run through this list?** The Holy Spirit is prompting you to remember these people and pray for them to experience his resources as they work through their struggles.

• **For the Potter's House ministry:** It already is a place for conversation and prayer and connecting on Friday nights. 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 and Alpha participants:** 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.

Alpha!



Alpha meets on Thursdays, 6:30 pm. Cards are available to use as invitations. Dinner is free, followed by a teaching and small groups, all ending by 8:15 pm.

Dinner is free, but we provide it. Please check the sign-up sheets in the Fellowship Room to see what you could provide, even if you are not attending. Contact Mary Butkevich (marybutkevich@gmail.com or 860 514-4343) if you are interested in being part of the team or Sandy Miller (sanjeanm@aol.com or 860 459-0361) to help with meals.

Keeping Up



- Gary and Denise Merrill have moved: 472 Wimbledon Gate North, Torrington, CT 06790. Phone numbers remain the same.
- *Linda Chandon's contact info: 48 Walnut Street, Thomaston, CT 06787. Phone: 860 283-4205*
- Dear Members of the Covenant Church of Thomaston, Thank you for your generous gift to Kairos Prison Ministry. You may know it costs about \$5,000 to host a weekend. I am amazed to see how God provides. We just finished the first of our two weekends, the first being at Radgowski. In three weeks we will be doing a three-day weekend at Corrigan – a different building within the Corrigan-Radgowski Correctional Center. The number of men we had last weekend was low by Kairos standards (8), but the men who were there were clearly touched and influenced by the Holy Spirit. Life changing! Thank you for your support! God's blessing on you, David Cameron
- *Thank you for all the prayers through the years, but also the cards, visits, and meals during our time of grief with the passing of Celeste's brother Peter. Thank you and sincerely appreciated. Mike and Celeste Bergamo*



Women Ministries

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

Annual Outing: The Bellamy-Ferriday House and Garden in Bethlehem on Saturday, May 11. This historic site was created by two extraordinary individuals, the Rev. Joseph Bellamy (1719-1790), a charismatic preacher who opened the first school of theology in America; and Miss Caroline Ferriday (1902-1990) socialite, actress, philanthropist, and writer. Miss Ferriday and her house are featured in the best-selling novel *Lilac Girls*. Our tour starts at 10:30 (\$10 per person). Lunch following at Charcoal Chef in Woodbury after stopping by the Abbey of Regina Laudis to see the spectacular 18th century creche. Sign up in advance with Elsa Hurlbert or Ann Ryan. **Meet at church at 10:00 a.m. to carpool.**

Purses of Love: Survivors of domestic abuse often flee from their homes with nothing more than the clothes on their backs. Traumatized and fearful, they turn to organizations like Susan B. Anthony Project for refuge. It's our 10th year to generously gift these women with our "Purses of Love" for Mother's Day. Let's once again show that we care about them, and pamper them with our love!

Donate: Purses, either brand new or gently used and clean; Gift cards for local chain stores or fast-food restaurants; MasterCard or Visa prepaid cards; Creams, sanitizers, manicure/pedicure kits, beauty products; Journals, note cards, game books, pens, pencils, postage stamps; Flashlights, sewing kits; Scarves, necklaces, bracelets; Candy or other small snacks.



Due by no later than **Monday, May 6**. Pink collection tubs are in the Gathering Room and the Potter's House. Thank you!

Continuing Activities

1. **Women's PM Study:** (for women who work during the day). Church Library every other Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. (5/14, 5/28).
2. **Women's Study:** Thursday mornings at 9:30 a.m. in the Potter's House.
3. **Women's Book Club:** The book to read is *Hope on the Inside* by Marie Bostwick. Watch for when to meet to discuss.

Sermons online

Go to covchurchthomaston.org and click on Sermons to select which sermon to listen to or to share with a friend.

Borrowing Church Furnishings

Trustees policy for borrowing church furnishings:

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.

Helping Each Other in Difficult Times

In her sermon on April 28, Lisa Sundell Olsen reminded us of what Eamon Anderson shared with us when she was here at the end of March.

1. Be aware of those around us who are suffering or struggling through situations. It's awkward to say nothing and ignore their trial, so express specific concern: "It stinks that you lost your job."
2. Ask how they are doing. Then really listen. Don't try to minimize their situation.
3. Offer tangible help, something specific: "I'm going out this afternoon to do errands. What can I do for you?"
4. Do not judge them. Making someone feel "less than" when they are going through trials makes things worse.

East Coast Conference Annual Meeting Update:

2019 MISSION & MINISTRY - By the Spirit [Live]

"Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit." Gal 5:25

Howard Burgoyne, superintendent of the East Coast Conference, led a wonderful annual meeting in Springfield, MA, at the end of April. His report detailed a great movement of God in our conference. The 2020 vision has been to live by a conscious dependence on the Holy Spirit: "We live by the Spirit" (our very existence) and therefore our life (our very mission) is to "keep in step with the Spirit."

Burgoyne asks, What steps is the Spirit taking in the world, in our communities? How are we discerning together the pregnant purposes of the Spirit, through Christ, for the salvation of the world? The Spirit is taking strategic steps, in real time, that are advancing the Kingdom of God. Our calling is to live by the Spirit – to live and pivot in a conscious dependence on the discernment of the Spirit's movement. Our discipleship is to join the Spirit's advance, neither racing ahead, nor lagging behind-but keeping in step.

Conscious that we are a movement of God, we pray and labor, and partner together as a fellowship of Christians and congregations to:

Mobilize church planting
Organize regional networks
Vitalize congregations
Equip leaders
Make disciples
Engage justice for the marginalized
Nurture Covenant Identity
Tell the story of Jesus

The conference asks for our support, **3.5 %** of our offerings each year, as a goal to strive for. They also recommend **1 %** to go to Pilgrim Pines Conference Center and **.5 %** to The New England Seafarer's Mission. Let's take steps to see this happen, to make and keep an important missional commitment!

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 soxj269@aol.com) or Linda (lindaehansen@aol.com or 860 283-9359).



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.

5/5 5:00 pm Trailblazers
5/12 Mother's Day, no Trailblazers
5/19 Confirmation, no Trailblazers
5/26 Memorial Day, no Trailblazers
6/2 5:00 pm Trailblazers
6/7-8 Trailblazers Lockin



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.



5/5 5:00 pm Class; First Rehearsal!
Turn in your final projects!!
5/12 Mother's Day, no D/C
5/15 6:00 pm Confirmation Dinner
5/18 9:00 am Confirmation Rehearsal
5/19 Confirmation! Arrive at 9:00 for flowers, pictures

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.

5/5 5:00 CHYG
5/12 Mother's Day, no CHYG
5/26 5:00 CHYG
6/2 5:00 CHYG
6/9 Last CHYG, TBA



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.

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, Pastor Ann, and others. Please drop in on a Friday night to see if this is one of God's callings for you. Please share a Potter's House business card (in the Potter's House) with anyone who might want to come in.

Missed Offering

Missed Offering: Our Financial Secretary notes that, because we had to cancel worship for a January storm, our offerings for the year are down just about what would have come in that week. **At this point, we are just keeping up with our bills.** If you can, please make up what you would have given. Our commitments continue even when we can't be here.

Online Giving

If you are a person who has committed to give the same amount every week, giving online really makes sense. To set up regular online giving to the Covenant Church go to covchurchthomaston.org and click on the About tab.

May 2019 (Rev 4/30/2019)

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>6:30 NA (Fellowship) 7:30 Choir</p>	<p>2 6:30 Men’s Study (Potter’s) 9:30 Women’s Bible Study (Potter’s)</p> <p>6:30 Alpha (Fellowship, Potter’s) 7:00 Men’s Study (Library)</p>	<p>3</p> <p>7-10 Potter’s House Open</p>	<p>4 HomeFront Day 9:00 Outside Church Work Day</p>
<p>5* 11:35 Church Board (Library)</p> <p>5:00 Discipleship (Gathering) 5:00 CHYG, D/C, Trailblazers</p>	<p>6 9:30 39ers Study (Gathering)</p> <p>6:30 Stitching with Spirit</p>	<p>7</p> <p>6:30 Prayer (Potter’s)</p>	<p>8</p> <p>6:30 Al-Anon Dist. Business (Youth Room) 6:30 NA (Fellowship) 7:30 Choir</p>	<p>9 6:30 Men’s Study (Potter’s) 9:30 Women’s Bible Study (Potter’s)</p> <p>6:30 Alpha (Fellowship, Potter’s) 7:00 Men’s Study (Library)</p>	<p>10</p> <p>7-10 Potter’s House Open</p>	<p>11 9:00 Inside Church Work Day 10:30 WM Outing-Bethlehem 7:00 Second Saturday Worship & Prayer (Potter’s)</p>
<p>12* MOTHER’S DAY</p> <p>5:00 Discipleship (Gathering)</p>	<p>13 9:30 39ers Study (Gathering) 10:00 La Leche League (Nursery)</p> <p>6:30 Stitching with Spirit</p>	<p>14</p> <p>6:30 Women’s PM Study (Library) 6:30 Prayer (Potter’s)</p>	<p>15</p> <p>6:00 Confirmation Dinner (Fellowship) 6:30 NA(Youth Room) 7:30 Choir</p>	<p>16 6:30 Men’s Study (Potter’s) 9:30 Women’s Bible Study (Potter’s)</p> <p>6:30 Grief Support (Gathering) 6:30 Alpha (Fellowship, Potter’s) 7:00 Men’s Study (Library)</p>	<p>17</p> <p>7-10 Potter’s House open</p>	<p>18 9:00 Confirmation Rehearsal 4-8 pm Alpha Retreat (Fellowship, Potter’s)</p>
<p>19* CONFIRMATION</p>	<p>20 9:30 39ers Study (Gathering)</p> <p>6:30 Stitching with Spirit</p>	<p>21</p> <p>6:30 Prayer (Potter’s)</p>	<p>22</p> <p>6:30 NA(Fellowship) 7:30 Choir</p>	<p>23 6:30 Men’s Study (Potter’s) 9:30 Women’s Bible Study (Potter’s)</p> <p>6:30 Alpha (Fellowship, Potter’s) 7:00 Men’s Study (Library)</p>	<p>24</p> <p>7-10 Potter’s House Open</p>	<p>25 9:30-1:00 Torrington Soup Kitchen</p>
<p>26*</p> <p>5:00 CHYG</p>	<p>27 MEMORIAL DAY</p>	<p>28</p> <p>6:30 Women’s PM Study (Library) 6:30 Prayer (Potter’s)</p>	<p>29</p> <p>6:30 NA (Fellowship) 7:30 Choir</p>	<p>30 6:30 Men’s Study (Potter’s) 9:30 Women’s Bible Study (Potter’s)</p> <p>6:30 Alpha (Fellowship, Potter’s) 7:00 Men’s Study (Library)</p>	<p>31</p> <p>7-10 Potter’s House Open</p>	

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

Coffee Fellowship sponsored by: Trustees 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:		
5/5	Sandy Miller Cecelia Ewers	6/2	5/5	Communion – none		5/5	Peggy Steinis	
5/12	Melanie Dobos Aubrey Jackson	6/9	5/12	Lucille Maslak		5/12	Ken Semeraro	
5/19	Melanie Dobos Kiersten Sundell	6/16	5/19	Lisa Sundell Olsen		5/19	Confirmands	
5/26	Maja Cederberg Lauren Whaley	6/23	5/26	Ruth Johnson		5/26	Ted Ryan	
		6/30	6/2	Communion – none		6/2	Peggy Steinis	
			6/9			6/9	Lisa Sundell Olsen	
			6/16			6/16	Dave McClay	
			6/23			6/23	Gina Whaley	
			6/30			6/30	Jessica Bedosky	

Sunday School Staff

Pre-K – K Cindy Olbrys,	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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May Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays				Anniversaries	
1 Tom Duffany (son)	8 Becky Carr	18 Alex Dunn	26 Drew Conlon		
2 Nick Samela	11 Brianna Boston	19 Chris Sundell	26 Ruth Johnson	6 Lou & Bill Wynkoop	
4 Stan Hurlbert	12 Ryan Hurlbert	20 Kyle Muckle	28 Asher Ewers	14 Michele & Bill Dayton	
5 Linda Chandon	13 Elin Saghafi	20 Lauren Vigeant	28 Cathy Fredlund	17 Jen & Nick Samela	
7 Gunnar Barrett	15 Amy Bond	21 Cameron Johnson	28 Cheryl Morton	24 Barb & Ed Hanley	
7 Ann Carr	15 Sarah Roaix	22 Beth Campbell	29 Jamie Saghafi	28 Jessica & John Bedosky	
7 Maja Cederberg	16 Zach Kelley	25 Ethan Jackson	30 Katie Grabherr	29 Kim & Tom Duffany	
7 Alexa Sanson	18 Zach DeBisschop	25 Liz Montambault	31 Michele Dayton		

Connections:

- 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)
- 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