

The



Spire

April 2010 ~ The United Parish, Upton, MA ~ Lent/Eastertide

Time

Wm. Willimon – Methodist pastor, teacher, writer and now bishop – dates the end of American Christendom (the supremacy of Christian culture in America) to a specific date: May 15, 1967, when the Fox Theater first showed a movie on a Sunday afternoon. This broaching of the formerly unquestioned acceptance of a Christian value – Sunday as sabbath – was the first crack in Christianity’s dominance over secular American society. The ways of the world and the ways of Church increasingly began to diverge.

Some would say this is not a bad thing. The worst corruptions of both church and state have occurred when the power and authority of one was confused with the power and authority of the other. Many leading contemporary Christian thinkers and teachers urge the Church not to attempt to recapture its lost influence over secular culture, but to clearly and cogently articulate what defines and distinguishes it *over and against* the culture it finds itself in. The way of Jesus is different than the way of the world, and we are better off seeing, accepting and defining ourselves according to what makes us unique – not closing ranks or shutting doors, but seeing our choice to follow Jesus as a lifestyle choice that encourages certain values and behaviors and discourages others.

One of the things that makes the Christian community unique is how we keep time. The

Inside this Issue...

Holy Week Schedule:

Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter events...

Six-Week Christian Parenting Class...

Parenting Younger children – offered by Amy Coburn-Gaudet, MSW starts Mon. April 12, 7 pm

Meditation Class

Resumes: *Wednesdays, 8:00 pm with Kelly Luetkemeyer* – starts April 7

Looking Ahead...

Sunday, May 2 – Return of **Faith in Action Sunday – *be the Church in service*** as we leave the building to serve the world!

Introduction to the

Bible: *for 3^d grade and older, four Sundays in April - May*

“Christian calendar,” the calendar of liturgical seasons and holy days, has always run counter to the timekeeping of the secular world. Our year begins on the first Sunday of Advent, it culminates with Christ the King Sunday (not New Years Eve), and its center point is the great feast day of Easter. Sundays being little “mini-Easters,” means every week we begin the week with resurrection.

When the early church moved its worship day to Sunday, the first day of the week, instead of Saturday, the last day of the week it made a profound theological statement. Resurrection is the starting point! What a different story that is than the story our culture tells! The “origin” (literally, “rising up”) of our week isn’t Monday, isn’t work, isn’t the daily grind to supply and prove ourselves, but instead is the gracious, holy, powerful, joyful work of God that lovingly rebirths all creation in the rebirth of Christ from the grave. That is where our time, our week, our life, our calendar starts. Sunday, not Monday, is where we begin our lives. It is meant to shape and define and color the whole week that follows.

This Easter Sunday may we recover the power of beginning with resurrection and telling time according to that holy timetable! And let all else flow from there!

Blessings, Rev. Jan Gregory-Charpentier

Holy Week

Sunday, March 28 - Palm/Passion

Sunday

- We begin before worship with a Dedication of the Palms service at 9:30 and get ourselves ready for a joyful, celebratory palm procession to begin the worship service. During worship we move through the events of Holy Week, ending looking towards the cross and Good Friday.

Thursday, April 1 - Maundy Thursday



A Family Supper and Maundy Thursday Service for all ages (sponsored by the Faith Development Committee) begins at 6:00pm. A very family-friendly service commemorating the Last Supper takes place around the altar in the Sanctuary at 7:30 pm.

- Prayer Vigil begins: We keep a 24-hour prayer vigil from 8:00 pm on Maundy Thursday to 8:00 pm on Good Friday. A prayer room is set up in the Parlor for participants to keep vigil in ½ -1 hour increments. Our goal is to “stay awake and pray” with Christ through the hours of his suffering and death. The Prayer Vigil has proven to be a deeply meaningful experience for those who’ve participated in past years. Families have come together or individuals by themselves. Prayer guides and suggested approaches to spending your time in prayer are provided.

Friday, April 2 - Good Friday

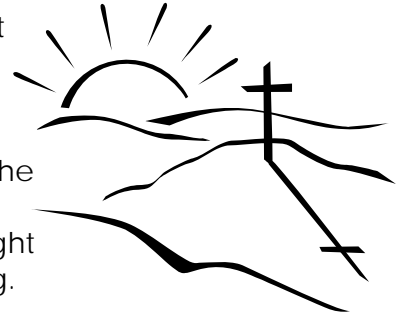
- A self-guided “Stations of the Cross” will be set up in the Sanctuary and the sanctuary will be open all day from 6 am until 8 pm. Walk at your own pace through seven “stations” that represent the events of Jesus’ passion. Suggestions for prayer and meditation are provided at each stop. Walk through in 15 minutes or spend an hour. A



“host” (deacon, pastor or visitation minister will be quietly in background all day to offer company and conversation if you so choose). Rev. Jan will be hosting from 6-8 pm and if you’d like to come for the last hour of the vigil and the “Stations of the Cross,” we’ll conclude with a short prayer service to close Good Friday.

Sunday, April 4- Easter

- Sunrise Service at Kiwanis Beach, Time: 6:00 am. We gather in the dark and await the rising of the sun to usher in the Light of Easter morning. Communion.



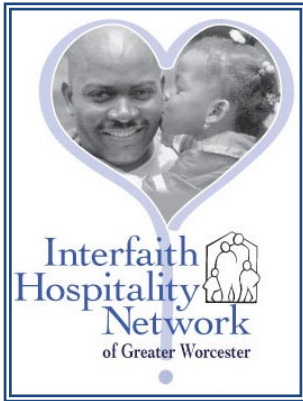
- Easter morning breakfast at the church at 6:45 am.
- Easter Worship 9:45 am – with all the gusto we can manage we proclaim the ancient Easter affirmation, “Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!” with Festival Choir and Intergenerational Festival Orchestra!



A “Writing for Worship” Project

Rev. Jan is joining the Spiritual Writing Group on Thursday, April 8, at 8 pm for the first part of a special, 2-session program on planning and writing worship materials for Pentecost Sunday. As part of her Doctor of Ministry program, Rev. Jan must lead a worship writing project involving members learning about and together writing worship materials for a specific service. On Thursday, April 8 anyone who would like to be involved is welcome to join the Spiritual Writing Group and Rev. Jan to come learn a little more about the holy day of Pentecost, engage in some group discussion and writing exercises all designed to fashion prayers and other worship materials for Pentecost Sunday, May 23rd. If you’d like to be in on the fun, just show up or contact Rev. Jan for more information (508) 529-9819.

INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY NETWORK OF GREATER WORCESTER NEWS



Vacation with a Mission!

Who needs a reason to vacation? How about vacationing while raising funds for the IHN of Greater Worcester?

The Interfaith Hospitality Network of

Greater Worcester is sponsoring a pledge drive with a nice reward. Network congregation members and other IHN friends have generously donated the use of their vacation homes (or time shares) to be raffled off to benefit the homeless children and their families that our IHN serves day in and day out.

For a \$100 donation, you can put your name in a "bucket" for a weekend in Maine, a week on Cape Cod, a long weekend in New Hampshire. A brochure with available properties and the dates they're offered will be mailed/emailed soon to member congregations and the IHN wider community. The number of tickets is limited so the chance to successfully win a vacation you want and can use will remain high.

A \$100 donation is a generous contribution, for sure! But it will go a long way in assisting the Interfaith Hospitality Network to fulfill its mission to join forces across faith communities to serve homeless families and assist in their goal of stability and self-reliance. Your \$100 tax deductible donation will:

- Provide overnight accommodation for a family of five for 2 nights, or
- Transport children and families in the program van for a week, or

- Move the IHN from one shelter congregation to the next twice.
- A provide a week's worth of advocacy and case management for one family... and more.

Please consider pledging \$100 to sustain the IHN for the year to come, and get a great chance at a paid vacation for you! Vacation with a Mission raffle tickets will be available through the United Parish and the IHN Day Center on May 1. The drawings will be made at the *Ride for a Reason* celebration picnic on June 12.

SAVE THE DATE!

- Annual Walk for the Homeless -

Sunday, May 16th 1:00pm

The Junior Youth Group is walking in the annual *Walk for the Homeless* and is hoping to recruit an intergenerational team from the United Parish to join them. This is an easy 3-mile walk through Worcester and benefits several social service agencies in greater Worcester that work with homeless individuals and families, including the IHN of Greater Worcester. The walk is for all ages (Rev. Jan even pushed a stroller the entire route in years past!) and ends with a celebration cookout and concert in the park. Come help raise needed money for the IHN and other great agencies and have fun at the same time! Let's see if we can get a multi-age United Parish contingent!



Ride for a Reason on June 12!

A fun, scenic and well-supported bike ride to benefit the Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greater Worcester.

When: Saturday, June 12, 9 am – Noon

Where: Start and Finish at 1st Cong. Church, W. Boylston.

Ride: 30 and 15 route options, with cue sheets and marked turns; “sag wagon” (support vehicles to aid riders along the route with flats or other problems); rest stops with food, water and first aid for humans and bikes; celebration picnic at the end of the ride.

Route: through scenic W. Boylston, Sterling, Clinton, and Leominster; terrain suitable for novice and experienced riders.

Registration: \$15 (with a commitment to fundraise \$200) or \$65 (with no additional fundraising); children under 16 need to ride with a parent (as we’ll be on open roads). Go to www.ihnworchester.org/event for registration forms.

Meditation Group Resumes...

The Meditation Group, led by Kelly Luetkemeyer will resume meeting on Wednesday evenings beginning April 7 at 8:00 in the church parlor. This is a wonderful opportunity to take a break from our busy lives and to gather for a time of quiet, spiritual reflection. Come and find a space of renewal and refreshment. The group will meet April 7, 14, 21, 28 and May 5, 12. For more information, contact Kelly at kgluetkemeyer@earthlink.net.



Our Faith in Action

Come BE The Church!!

**Join us for the 2nd Annual
FAITH IN ACTION SUNDAY**

May 2, 2010 immediately following the church service.

We will gather in the Vestry and split off into groups to go out and serve in our community together. All ages are welcomed!!

There will be a variety of activities including:
Picking up trash along the roadside
Lawn spruce ups
Readying gardens
Door to door canned food drive and more...

Team leaders are needed for each activity; there will be more information available at coffee hour on April 11th. If anyone has any ideas or suggestions for an activity please contact Siobhan Allan 508-529-2111 siobhan65@gmail.com

From the Food Pantry...

Many thanks to ALL our dedicated volunteers....we are grateful for your time and effort!

Our pantry is currently supplying 20-30 bags of non-perishable food on a weekly basis to support the needs of our clients, so our shelves find themselves emptying quickly! If you would keep us in mind when you are shopping, we are always in need of the following items:

Juice
Coffee and Tea
Canned Fruit
Tuna
Peanut Butter and Jelly
Pasta Sauce
ketchup, mustard, mayo
Toilet Tissue and Paper Towels

With much appreciation and thanks,

Amy Griswold and Nancy Gelineau
Food Pantry Co-coordinators

Faith Development

Maundy Thursday Pot-luck and Worship: During Holy week, on Thursday, April 1st, the Faith Development Committee will be hosting a family supper at 6:00pm, followed by a very family-friendly communion service commemorating the Last Supper. Look for the poster in the lower vestry and sign up to contribute a favorite dish. This is a great opportunity to share the deep spiritual meaning of Holy Week with friends and neighbors so invite them along too!

Easter Egg Hunt: Don't miss our annual FDC hosted Easter egg hunt, which will be taking place on the church grounds immediately following the Easter Sunday Service on April 4th. Please provide your children with baskets for this fun event. Come and experience the wonder of Easter from a child's perspective!

The United Parish Continuing Education Scholarship Application: Available for all graduating seniors. Acceptance will be based on financial need, church attendance, past and present youth group participation, community involvement and grade point average. Submission deadline has been extended to April 10th. Please see the Christian Education Director, Heather O'Toole for an application.

Third grade "Intro to the Bible" Class: All third grade students are invited to attend an "Introduction to the Bible" Class, lead by Christian Education Director Heather O'Toole. The classes this year will be held on Sunday mornings before worship upstairs in the Parlor from 8:45am until 9:30am on April 25th, May 9th, May 16th and May 23rd. All children that attend a minimum of three out of four of the classes will be recognized and presented with a Bible on children's Sunday June 6th.

Thank you to all committees and individuals who donated gift baskets or other items for the Senior Youth Group Auction Night! Proceeds from the auction will help our youth as they prepare for a mission trip in July to head to Harvest of Hope in VA, where they will be working together to fight world hunger!

WED A.M. NOOMA IS BACK!

As part of our Wednesday morning Women's Bible Study Group, we are revisiting a special program called *Nooma* beginning on Wed April 7th from 9:30am – 11:00.

Nooma is a series of 10-14 minute videos that are extremely well-done, provocative and relevant to everyday life. They will provide the focus for group discussion. The group leader will host and start discussion but the group will take the conversation anywhere they want in response to the videos. This will be a time for growing in spirit and friendship as we set aside an hour and a half each week to reflect and share on life, faith, and community.

If you would like to participate, please contact Heather O'Toole at heatheratchurch@charter.net or call 508-529-3192 during my office hours: Tues, Wed and Fri from 9am – 3pm.

Yours in Faith,
Heather O'Toole, Christian Education Director

Calling all parents with young children!

Parenting: The Early Years is a 6 session study group based on the work of Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott (who have been featured on Oprah and Focus on the Family). As we go through the accompanying study guide together each week, we will watch a 10 minute video and examine the "10 biblical traits your kids will remember you for" that the Drs. Parrott discuss. They maintain that "who you are [as a parent] matters more than what you do." The group will be lead by Amy Coburn Gaudet and will meet on Monday nights from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m., April 12, 19, 26 and May 10, 17 and 24 (no meeting on May 3). Please call Amy at 508-529-6518 or email coburngaudet@msn.com with any questions or to sign up.



Junior Youth Group News

What a great experience at Camp Berea! Six youth leaders and fifteen youth went up for a weekend of spiritual growth, fun and camaraderie. A huge thank you to parent volunteers Eileen Woods and Ron Charpentier, who were an amazing part of our leadership team. Thanks to the wonderful kids who came and made it such a great experience. Parents, thanks for trusting us with your children for the weekend! The Chapel Sessions were full of laughter ("The Enforcer" teaching us about sportsman-like conduct), music (grooving to Christian rock of the Mark White Band), and wonderful spiritual direction from the speaker Travis Crim. We had competitive games of Wacky Ball and Finger Blasters (Go, red team!!). Some of us spent the free time on Saturday playing marathon games of Carpet Ball! Some of us played flag football (and got injuries to reflect their competitive edge); some tie-dyed Berea t-shirts; some visited with the band, some played a big silly game of Apples to Apples; some played a muddy game of paintball; some enjoyed the yummy treats (think fried dough and glorious ice cream frappes) from the snack bar; some visited the book store and did a little shopping; some climbed rock walls, some played basketball and some hung out and relaxed.

The theme of weekend was "**Illuminate.**" Illuminate is based on the message of Matthew 5:13-16; instructing us to be a source of light to the world by reflecting God's light in a way that glorifies God in heaven. Our speaker, Travis Crim, used humor and real life examples to illustrate the best ways we can illuminate the world through the light of Christ. Friday night, Travis talked about illuminating the world by *forgiveness*. Travis used the example from his own life of a betrayal in 7th grade by his best friend. He used the parable in John 8 of the adulterous woman who was to be stoned to death but for the words of Jesus, "He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." When all of her accusers are gone, Jesus asks her, "Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?" The woman replies, "No one, Lord." To which Jesus responds, "Neither do I condemn you; go your

way. From now on sin no more." This picture of forgiveness without shame is the example Christ leaves us to follow. Travis reminded us that when we forgive, the world looks at that and asks how and why we do that.

At the next Chapel session on Saturday morning, Travis talked about *obedience* as a way to illuminate the world through God's light, citing the verse 1 John 5:3, "For this is the love of God. That we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome." Travis talked about God knowing what is best for us, even when we have other ideas about what we want to do. The kids will remember Travis' funny example of his own son, Silas, dancing to Barney in his high chair! He also gave us a much more serious example of how sex outside of marriage can lead to a loss of freedom. Although, it is counter-intuitive to think that obedience leads to greater freedom, Travis reminded us that the truest freedom comes with obedience to God. If we truly trust that God loves us and wants the best for us, then we will obey him. When we obey God, we are communicating to the world that He is trustworthy. Travis then invited the kids to ask themselves; "In what area of my life do I struggle to obey? Why?" He suggested that these might be areas where we don't fully trust God to take care of us.

In the third session, Travis focused on illuminating the world by *loving others well*. He gave us John 13:34-35, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." Travis asked who among us had someone who we knew would love us "no matter what." While many of us are blessed to have these relationships, we can never embody the unconditional love that God gives us. We can follow His example, and do our best to love others as He loves us.

In the last session, Travis focused on *servicing*. He said that what comes naturally to us is to be all about ourselves (Travis gave another funny example of this illustrated in his 18 month old son's play date with a friend). This is contrary to what Jesus' message is. Mark 10:43-45 reminds us that even Jesus didn't come to be served, but to serve. Travis read

Galatians 5:13-15, reminding us that we are called to serve one another through love and that serving leads to freedom. In opposition to this, when we serve ourselves, we become slaves to ourselves. He also stated that serving lures us into community and that we are created to share our blessings – not to enjoy them alone. He reminded the kids that they don't have to go on a mission trip to begin to serve. They can think about serving in their own lives where they are right now. He even suggested that they might consider taking out the trash without being asked! Even doing what they are asked to do by a parent without complaint is a form of serving, because serving is often inconvenient.

We had a great time hanging out together, praising God, and enjoying all the many activities. Can't wait 'til next year.

Junior Youth Group Schedule April 2010

Friday, April 2: 7:00-8:00pm Prayer Vigil

Come and together as a group we'll pray and be present with Christ as Good Friday draws to a close.

Sunday, April 4: Easter Sunday! - No Meeting

Friday, April 9: 6:00-8:00 Activity/Game Night; We'll play games like Whiffle Ball and Hide & Seek. Come join us for outside games (weather permitting) and hanging out for an evening of fun.

Sunday, April 11: 9:45am JYG Meeting

Sunday, April 18: 9:45am JYG Meeting

Sunday, April 25: 9:45am JYG Meeting

THANK YOU — JYG would like to thank the congregation for helping us raise money last year for Heifer International. Through personal donations and fund-raising efforts, JYG purchased 2 llamas, 3 bee hives, 1 flock of chicks, 1 set of tree seedlings and 1 water buffalo share. We are happy to know that our gifts will keep giving. The certificate that Heifer International sent to acknowledge our gift is posted in the lower vestry for all to share.

Vacation Bible School 2010

"High Seas Expedition"

As you begin to make your summer plans, get ready to set sail with Vacation Bible School and Drama Camp on a "High Seas Expedition" this July! With this year's theme: "an ocean of fun awaits you and your crew as you board the good ship VBS and feel the deep rolling waves of God's love." Both Vacation Bible School and Drama Camp will be held the week of July 5th through July 9th from 9:00am to noon each day. Children entering preschool through grade 8 as of the fall of 2010 are welcome to climb aboard and join in the fun with crafts, music, recreation, drama, fun-themed snacks and much more! Registration forms will be available by April 5th and the deadline for registration is May 14th in order to have time to order student materials. Register early as space is limited! Please contact Tracee Perkins at (508) 529-2112 or tperkins2112@charter.net with any questions or if you would like to volunteer. We hope to see you in July!!



ATTENTION
SUNDAY SCHOOL PARENTS!

(Pre-school through JYG)

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY MUSICAL
A TECHNICOLOR PROMISE

by Allen Pote

"Everyone loves a rainbow! It is a wonder of creation, radiating beauty after a rain. More important, as the sign of the covenant, it reminds us of God's overwhelming love & grace. Through appealing music and drama, A TECHNICOLOR PROMISE retells the events surrounding God's promise."

We invite all children to be a part of this wonderful Sunday School production on Sunday, June 6th.

It isn't too late to join our zoo! Please see Heather O'Toole, Sharon Bliss or Sue Bonito if your child would like to join us on the ark!

If you have any questions please see Heather O'Toole.



THE FLAMINGOS
HAVE BEEN SPOTTED!!

(And will land in Upton by April!)

While we LOVE the warm weather, unfortunately it brings those pesky birds back to Upton once again!

Word has it that THIS year those flamingos are...



BIGGER
UGLIER

and

TRAVEL IN MUCH
LARGER FLOCKS!

Oh no! How do I NOT get flocked by these horrible looking creatures???

Well the solution is simple.

The Senior High Youth Group will personally GUARD your yard for the one-time LOW fee of \$20. That's right – we can PERSONALLY GUARANTEE that your yard will be safe from these pesky birds!

If you are unfortunate enough to have the birds land on your yard – PLEASE FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS ON THE SIGN WHICH WILL BE HANGING ON A FLAMINGO'S NECK.

If you would like to purchase Flamingo Insurance, please see Heather O'Toole, Sharon Bliss or Brian LeSuer.

Thank you!

(This is a fundraiser, and all funds will help pay for the Senior High Youth Group Mission trip to Harvest for Hope)

Senior Youth Group

Schedule

Senior High Youth Group Welcomes

All 9th – 12th Graders!

Meetings are held every Sunday
From 6:30 – 8:00 pm
(Unless noted differently below)

SYG is now on Facebook!

If you would like to join us - please create a Facebook account (www.facebook.com) and invite Sharon Lawn Bliss to be your friend! We'll take it from there and invite you to be part of the SYG group!

If you are already a member of Facebook – you can find us at “United Parish of Upton SYG”! You'll find pictures of our events and helpful information! We hope you'll consider joining us!

APRIL SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, April 1st: OVER NIGHT VIGIL

Please meet at the church at midnight. We will “stay awake with Jesus” until 5:00 am! Please pick up your youth at 5 am sharp on Friday!

SATURDAY, April 3rd: FLAMINGO FLOCKING/Evening

We will contact everyone via email/Facebook with a time to send out the flamingos! PLEASE WEAR DARK CLOTHING and bring flashlights!

April 4th: NO MEETING – HAPPY EASTER!

April 11th: Watching Youth Sunday DVD – JYG Invited!

April 18th: NO MEETING – SCHOOL VACATION!

April 25th: NO MEETING – SCHOOL VACATION!

FLAMINGO FLOCKING DURING THE ENTIRE MONTH OF APRIL CHECK YOUR EMAIL AND FACEBOOK OFTEN!!

MAY SCHEDULE

May 1st – 2nd: END OF THE YEAR RETREAT at Irons Homestead in RI!

\$25 per person. Saturday 3:00 pm – Sunday 4:00 pm

Please save this date as we have a wonderful time together sharing memories from the past year, say goodbye to our Seniors and look toward SYG's future.

May 16th: Service project – Community Harvest

As part of our mission to help stop hunger, we will offer our strength and energy to what ever gardening tasks are required at Community Harvest in Grafton where all of the produce raised is donated to local food banks.

May 23rd: Third World Cafe

Our youth will be cooking for their parents and teaching them some of what we have learned about world hunger.

(THIS WILL END OUR SYG WEEKLY PROGRAMMING)

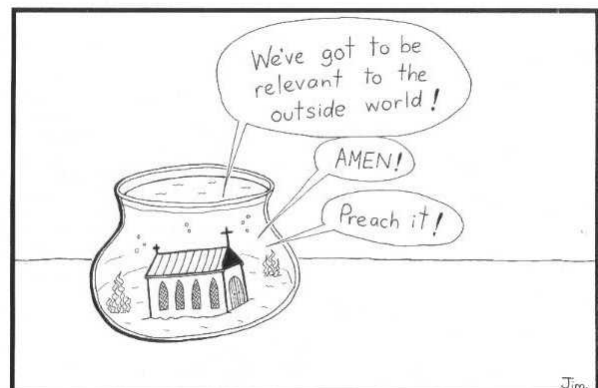
LOOKING AHEAD:

June 19th: Community Harvest

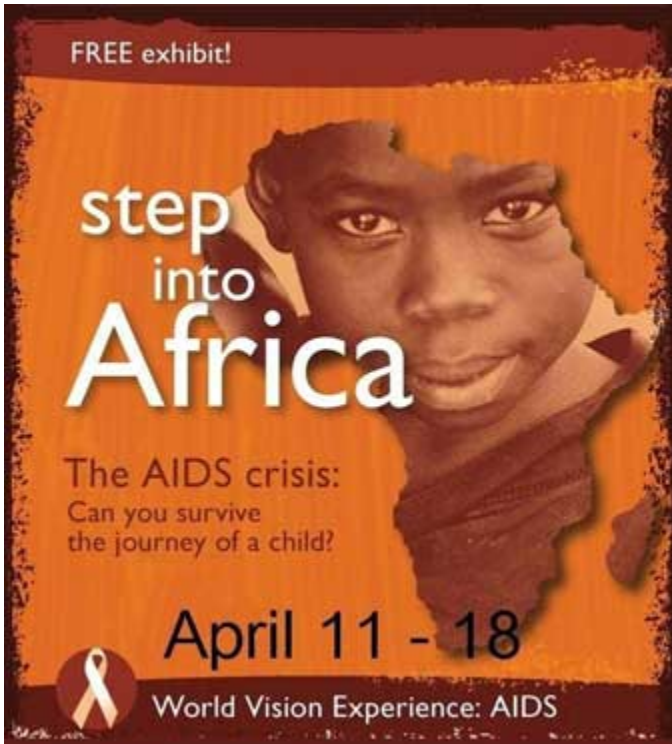
Service project - A second trip to Community Harvest for those who missed the first visit or liked it so much that they want to volunteer again.

July 4 -10: Harvest of Hope Mission Trip!

More details to come....Stay Tuned!



Save the Date!!



Millions of children today—most of them in Africa—are, through no fault of their own, caught up in the life-and-death drama of one of the greatest humanitarian crises of our time.

First Congregational Church of Hopkinton is partnering with World Vision to bring an interactive, walk-through exhibit to the Metrowest area. **Step into Africa World Vision Experience: AIDS**, now touring the U.S., will transport you into the heart of Africa and the life of a child affected by the AIDS crisis. The exhibit combines a stirring audio tour with captivating photography to give you a whole new perspective.

This museum-quality Experience will be available to tour at First Congregational Church, 146 E. Main Street in Hopkinton, April 11-18 and is free to the public. By joining with us, you will take a step toward helping our community address the needs of those affected by the global AIDS crisis. Visit www.worldvisionexperience.org/metrowest for more information.

United Parish Christian Nursery School News

Our theme for the month of April is "Mother Earth". We will celebrate spring and Earth Day by planting seeds and learning about recycling. We will also teach the Christian Easter story, make Easter baskets, decorate eggs and have an egg hunt outside!

On April 8th our Tues/Thurs classes will have a Teddy Bear Picnic. On April 9th our Mon/Wed/Fri classes will host our annual Tea Party where each child invites one adult to have tea with us. The children do all the baking and decorations for this event, as well as, practice their hosting skills and manners.

April 15th is our "Me and My Grown-up" evening event for all Tues/Thurs classes. Each child brings in one special adult to experience a shortened version of a typical preschool day. The dads really love the chance to come in for this. The month of April ends with our spring parent-teacher conferences.

Thank you to all who supported our Tupperware fundraiser. We appreciate your ongoing support!

We still have openings in our afternoon classes for the 2010/2011 school year. For information, please call Sandy Leacu at 508-529-6382. Thank you.

Our beloved teacher, Mrs. Pat Hall is retiring at the end of this school year. We would like to honor her with a scrapbook of memories of her past 17 years here. If any alumni families would like to send a note, card, photo, a memory, etc. to be included we would greatly appreciate it.

Please send or give it to Sandy Leacu directly in the nursery school office and PLEASE KEEP THIS GIFT A SECRET! (please send in all items by May 16th).

NON-Energy Low Effort Fundraising for our Church!

Great Lakes Scrip Center offers a large selection of scrip gift cards from America's favorite retailers. Take a look at the list of retailers and the rebate percentages:

www.glscrip.com/report/productlistreport.aspx?nogroup=1&Format=pdf&Extension=pdf

GLSC works with our partner retailers to offer hundreds of gift cards with substantial rebates. The United Parish buys the scrip gift cards from Great Lakes Scrip Center at a discount, and re-sells them for full face value. The discount - from two to fifteen percent or more - is a rebate retained by our church as revenue.

With scrip fundraising, our member families simply do their regular weekly shopping with gift cards from America's favorite retailers. With each purchase, our church earns cash rebates that can quickly add up to tens of thousands of dollars a year. Scrip is a powerful fundraising tool because families generate revenue through purchases they would make anyway. Groceries, clothing, toys, gifts, even gasoline can be purchased with scrip. An organization of 150 families easily spends between one and two million dollars per year on food, clothing and other essentials. If these families use scrip for these purchases, we could raise as much as \$40,000 to \$80,000 per year for our church -- without spending an additional penny.

THREE EASY STEPS

Place your order

You can email your order to unitedparishoffice@yahoo.com. Make sure you include your name, address, phone number, store, amount, & type of payment.

You can complete an order form (available at the church) and return it to the church. Include a check payable to "United Parish of Upton". OR you can call Sandra Ng at 508-529-3192.

Pay for your order

You can pay for your order by cash or check made payable to United Parish of Upton.

Receive your order

You can pick up your Scrip cards at church on Sunday or during church office hours Tues-Fri 9:00-2:00 (you may want to call ahead 508-529-3192 to make sure your cards are in).

Using SCRIP is easy and does not increase your spending! You will get exactly what you spend in gift cards from America's most popular retailers...Sign up today and help to increase our fundraising exponentially!!

See you Sunday!

Scott Allan

United Parish SCRIP Marketing & Promotion

Earth Day is April 22, 2010



We are all aware of the importance of being good stewards of God's world. Here are some practical and manageable ideas to put that awareness into practice:

1. **Green energy** – spend the extra few dollars a month on your electric bill to supplement your energy supply with electricity generated from green sources, like solar and wind. The extra you pay is tax deductible and what is a few dollars when we consider the long term cost of continuing our reliance on fossil fuels?
2. **Drive less** – walk, bike, carpool more. When we need to drive, group our errands into one outing, so we're not hopping in and out of the car all day.
3. **Natural cleaners**- there are great commercial and homemade ways to clean that don't use chemicals that harm the environment. Check out a book from the library or order on line for green cleaning do-it-yourself ideas.
4. **Compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFL)** – Don't buy one more incandescent light bulb! Though CFLs are more expensive

to start with, the money you save over the life of the bulb is only surpassed by the energy you save. If every home replaced just one regular light bulb with a CFL bulb that would save enough electricity to power a city of 1.5 million people. Or in terms of oil not burned, it would save the equivalent of taking 1.3 million cars off the road.

5. **Laundry** – only wash with a full load and hang your clothes out to dry. If every household in America line dried their laundry we could permanently close several power plants. Even if we can only line dry some of the time, we'll make an impact.
6. **Lawn care** – No ChemLawn, no artificial fertilizers or pesticides. Kick the country club- looking lawn habit. A natural lawn uses less water. It enhances the life of needed organisms in the soil. It is better for your children, your pets and the earth.
7. **Reusable grocery bags** – I know it's a pain in the neck to remember them when you go out shopping, but I just try to put the empty bags right back in the car so I don't have to count on planning ahead.
8. **Limited air conditioning and heating** – turn down the heat or air conditioning by 1 degree and save 5-10% on your costs and save the planet a lot, too.
9. **Eat less red meat** – not only for your health but because livestock emissions of methane have a negative impact on the environment, too. I read that a Vegan driving an SUV is better for the overall environment than a carnivore driving a hybrid. Now maybe we don't have to choose between one extreme or the other, but we could all eat less meat.
10. **Think globally, eat locally** – the more we make a point of eating food that is produced nearby and in season, we save the cost both financially and environmentally of shipping food long distances. Participate in Community Supported Agriculture (CSA); buy a share in a local farm and get a box of

whatever they're growing each week or month.

Excerpt from Rev. Jan's sermon "Living God's Life in Creation" March 21, 2010

Calling all gardeners!

For the second year in a row, the United Parish has the opportunity to use one of the garden plots at the Community Garden on Mechanic Street. Last year we raised several varieties of fresh, organic vegetables for our Food Pantry. We are hoping to recruit several gardeners to prepare the bed, plant, weed, water and harvest. If you are interested in joining this ministry team, please contact Sandy Leacu at leacu@yahoo.com.



Music Matters

With the approach of Holy Week, I have been thrilled to discover so many biblically based musical and dramatic specials on the television and radio. Dare I say that there has been no other event in recorded history that has inspired more art, literature, music and drama, than the life and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Holy Week takes us on an emotional rollercoaster. Here are just some of the events we recall during this season:

- The exuberant "Hosannas" of Christ's entrance into Jerusalem;
- The uncertainty the Disciples must have felt as Jesus celebrated the last supper with them;
- The horror as the mobs cried out "Crucify Him;"
- The pain and despair of the crucifixion itself;
- The hopelessness, fear, guilt and emptiness following Jesus' death;

- The incredible joy of the resurrection.

Music, drama, art and literature seek to express these heights and depths of the human experience and our encounter with the divine. It is my prayer that the music, drama and spoken word we offer at the United Parish will touch your heart during this holy season, and that as you open yourself more and more to the Love of Jesus Christ, you will enter into a fuller expression of God's Life through you.

I am grateful for the many people who dedicate a part of themselves to music making at our church, whether it is on a regular basis or just for special occasions. Music ministry is truly a group effort and every person contributes so richly to the process. Bless you all!

Susan Bonito, Music Director

Holy Week Music Rehearsal Schedule:

<u>Group</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
Festival Choir	8:30 a.m.	Palm Sunday, Mar. 28	Sanctuary
Solid Rock(Teen Choir)	9:00 a.m.	Palm Sunday, Mar. 28	Sanctuary
Radiance(Children's Choir)	9:00 a.m.	Palm Sunday, Mar. 28	Sanctuary
Solid Rock (Teen Choir)	6:30 – 7:15 p.m.	Tuesday, March 30	Sanctuary
Festival Choir	7:00 – 9:00 p.m.	Tuesday, March 30	Sanctuary
Instrumentalists	7:00 – 7:45 p.m.	Tuesday, March 30	Sanctuary
Festival Choir	8:00 a.m.	Easter Sunday, April 4	Sanctuary
Instrumentalists	8:30 a.m.	Easter Sunday, April 4	Sanctuary
Hallelujah Chorus	8:45 a.m.	Easter Sunday, April 4	Sanctuary
Solid Rock	9:00 a.m.	Easter Sunday, April 4	Sanctuary

Radiance (Children's Choir)

No rehearsal during Holy Week

Technicolor Promise Choir

No Rehearsal during Holy Week

Rehearsals for Technicolor Promise will resume on Thursday, April 8th at 5:30 p.m.

Ushers, Readers, Greeters & Coffee Hour Hosts

April Head Deacon: Alan Caron

April 4 ~ Easter

Ushers: June Otte, Andy Weiner, Sandy Leacu

Reader: Sandy Alibozek

Greeters: The Van Norman Family

April 11 ~

Ushers: Tracee Perkins, June Otte, Sandy Leacu

Reader: TBD

Greeters: The Perkins Family

Coffee Hour Host: Sandra Ng

April 18 ~

Ushers: Carl Porter, Steve Rogers, Wayne Phipps

Reader: Susan Bonito

Greeter: Heidi Schultz

Coffee Hour Host: Liz Sylvester

April 25 ~

Ushers: Debbie Pedersen, Jeff & Sandra Ng

Reader: Brandy Capistran

Greeters: Bobbie Lawn Tower and Jay Tower

Coffee Hour Host: Trina Triggs

May Head Deacon: Andy Weiner

May 2 ~

Ushers: Brandy Capistran, Mike Lareau, June Otte

Reader: Tim Alibozek

Greeters: June and Dick Otte

Coffee Hour Host: Leanne Luetkemeyer

May 9 ~

Ushers: Carl Porter, Allison Morrill, Greg Morrill

Reader: Suze Caron

Greeters: The Ng Family

Coffee Hour Host: Heidi Schultz

May 16 ~

Ushers: Whitney & Dave Loeper, Nancy Campbell

Reader: Amy Coburn-Gaudet

Greeters: The Moeckel Family

Coffee Hour Host: Linda and Rich Gazoorian

May 23 ~

Ushers: Jay Tower, Bobbie Lawn-Tower, Trina Triggs

Reader: Jane Curl

Greeters: The Leutmeyer Family

Coffee Hour Host: Mike Lareau

May 30 ~

Ushers: Carl Porter, Cindy & Dominic Jannetti

Reader: Kelly Leutmeyer

Greeters: The Mangano Family

Coffee Hour Host: Liz Sylvester