



Gabriel's Horn Newsletter

...Heralding the Good News to our neighbors...

www.eastbloomfieldcongregationalchurch.org

March/April 2020

*** Our Sunday Worship Service is at 10:00 AM**

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Lenten Prayer: *God of wilderness and water, your Son was baptized and tempted as we are. Guide us through this season, that we may not avoid struggle, but open ourselves to blessing, through the cleansing depths of repentance and the heaven-rending words of the Spirit. Amen*

FROM THE PASTOR



"It was in the shade of a well in a rejected land to an ostracized woman. His eyes must have danced as he whispered the secret: "I am the Messiah"

"Six Hours One Friday" (Max Lucado, pg. 39-40)

It is the beginning of the Season of Lent: 40 days (not counting Sundays) where we have the chance to reflect and repent. The reflection is meant to be directed inward: at the selves we rarely show others. It is meant to be deep; a piercing light that illuminates even the darkest parts of our souls. It's a time to take stock: who are we, really? What do those dark places have to say about us? They are places we are not proud of. They are the sins that are never brought into the light of day, but stay hidden in the darkness: until the season of Lent. It is then that we are urged to bring them out, and take a look: a hard look. They are the actions we are ashamed of. They are the words uttered in anger. They are our

sins.

We do not wish to look at them. We would much prefer they stay buried, where we do not have to acknowledge them. Then we can pretend to be the upright and honest Christians we want others (and ourselves) to believe that we are.

This is not the time for appearances. This is not the time for false fronts and fake conversation. This is Lent: a time when we follow Jesus to the Cross. This is the time for complete honesty: if only with ourselves, and our Lord.

But that is the worst part. We can easily fool others. They only see what we want them to see. We can put on our smiling faces and no one sees the pain. But, when we drag it out for its annual examination, it's real. There is no avoidance. There is no running away. We are face to face with our sins.

So was the woman at the well (John 4:1-26). She was a Samaritan, an outcast from Jewish society. But, even more than that, she was an outcast in her own village. She had been married 5 times and was not married to the man she was with. The other village women would not associate with her. She was forced to come to the well at noon, so as not to encounter them. There he met Jesus, who asked her for a drink. Suspicious, she asked why he wanted a drink from her? Jesus explained about living water, and she eagerly asked where she could find it. But, before he would answer, he asked for her honesty: "Go, call your husband, and come back." She could have lied, but she was honest: "I have no husband." Jesus already knew that. He then went on to explain that soon it would not matter where God was worshipped (whether on Mt. Horeb as the Samaritans did or in Jerusalem where the Jews did), but that God was worshipped through the Son. As the woman acknowledged that she knew the Messiah was to come, Jesus said to her, "I am he."

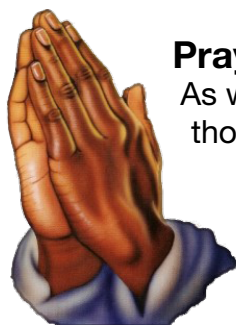
It is this passage in John that Max Lucado refers to in the above quotation. I use it in this column to make this point: Jesus announced his identity not to the rulers of the day or to the religious leaders (although they had certainly heard rumors). He announced it to an outcast woman in an outcast city. He went there to proclaim He was the Messiah. He went there to show that 5 time divorcee that he knew her: not just the outside, but the inside. He knew she had lost at love 5 times.

He knew she was with a man to whom she was not married. And, none of this mattered to him. Not one bit. What mattered was that she was honest with him. What mattered was that she was open to receiving him.

At all times, but especially during Lent, this is also what matters. I suggested that Lent was the time for reflection and repentance. When you are face to face with the darkest parts of you, your sin, repent of them. Tell Jesus you are sorry. Ask for his help to never commit these sins again. Pray that he will walk with you, as you are walking with Him to the cross.

This is the purpose of Lent...to be honest, to ask for and receive forgiveness for your sins, and to survey that wondrous cross on which our Savior died and know it was your sins that were nailed there with Him.

Sue



Prayer Requests:

As we go through the next couple of months, please keep the following people in your thoughts and prayers:

Cheryl Glamack * Donna Magraw * Mick Eddy * Alice McConnell * The Pastor
Search Committee * Bev Clark * Erica Walters

Prayer Request

Pastor Search Committee News:

The committee has received the responses to the survey they sent out; they thank all for returning the surveys. They are hard at work compiling the data from the surveys and determine what the church actually wants in a pastor. We continue to keep the committee in our thoughts and prayers as they continue on this path.

Birthdays:

These people are celebrating birthdays during these two months. When you see them, please wish them a Happy Birthday!

March: 6th - Robin Stewart; 28th - Will Tyler; 29th - Larry Messner; 31st - Cheryl Glamack

April: 12th - Bob Kelly



Church News:

* The church is now more friendly for the hearing impaired. We have installed a hearing loop system in the church. A hearing loop (also known as an induction loop) is a wireless device technology that works with telecoil hearing aids (almost all new hearing aids now have telecoils) and all cochlear implants to produce clear sound without feedback or background noise. Consisting of only three parts – an amplifier, microphone and very thin loop wire – hearing loops create a magnetic field that is picked up by any t-coil equipped hearing aid and converted to audible sound. If your hearing aid is not t-coil equipped, we have compatible headsets you can use to pick up the signal. Should help the hearing impaired hear the word of God in a more comfortable way.

* **Lenten Bible Study:** Please join us as we study Reverend Adam Hamilton's *The Walk* during this Lenten season. This 6-week study, complete with a DVD, covers what Reverend Hamilton considers the five essential spiritual practices that are taught throughout the New Testament and are rooted in Jesus' own walk with God. Each week, the study will focus on one of these practices: worship, study, serving, giving and bearing witness to our faith. We will meet each Thursday from **February 27th to April 2nd** beginning at 6:30 PM at the church. Please do not feel you need to commit to being at every session: we will take you as often as you can come!

* **In-Service Lenten Gospel Lessons:** Pastor Sue is conducting a Lenten sermon series entitled "Conversations with Jesus." For the weekly Gospel reading, we also will be exploring the conversations Jesus has with various different people in the lectionary texts during the 6 weeks between Ash Wednesday (February 26) and ending on Palm/Passion Sunday (April 5). During this time, the lay readers will read the Gospel lessons in different voices: the voice of Jesus, and the voice of the one to whom he is speaking. The congregation will read the part of the disciples. Should be a unique and educational way to dive deeper into Lent.

* **Parsonage Remodel:** The parsonage is getting a much needed remodel. Thanks to the demolition/prep work efforts of Nick Glamack, Bob Kelly, Judd Rockcastle and Robin Stewart, the kitchen and bathrooms have been gutted, new interior doors installed and much painting has been done. A local contractor will now come in and install new kitchen & bathroom appliances, install kitchen cabinets and refinish the wood floors, among other things. As the project continues, you'll see more pictures, but for now, take a look at the home ready for the contractor:



- * **Church Fundraiser:** We are hosting two BBQs from Gale-Wyn Catering on **April 26** and **May 31**. Both will be set up at Shivers, Shakes & Cones (6570 Rt. 5, Bloomfield; at the intersection of routes 5 & 20 and 64). Each will start at 11:00 AM and are scheduled to stop at 4:00 PM (unless sold out beforehand). We will run a bake sale at the same time/place and will also have water available for sale.

The news is that the church's worship service will begin an hour earlier on those days so that members can be ready to sell chicken at 11:00. So add a reminder to your calendar that worship services will begin at **9:00 AM** on those two Sundays.

Reoccurring Calendar Events (Monthly):

- * **Woman's Breakfast:** meets the first Sunday of every month at Brady J's restaurant (Bloomfield) at 8:00 AM. All interested women are invited; being a member of the church is not a requirement. For this period, the group meets **March 1** and **April 5**.

- * **Special Offering:** An extra offering plate is passed on the first Sunday of every month. This is a special offering to support church outreach to the local community and local missions. For this period, the offering is **March 1** and **April 5**.

- * **Church Council:** The council meets the first Sunday of every month after the worship service (generally around 11:30/12:00 PM). All are welcome to attend. For this period, the meetings are **March 1** and **April 5**.

- * **Choir Practice:** The choir meets at 7:30 PM every Wednesday at the church. All are welcome to come sing. The choir also meets at 9:15 AM every Sunday, so if you can't make Wednesdays, you are more than welcome to come to the Sunday practices. A great way to worship!

- * **Men's Breakfast:** meets the last Sunday of every month at Brady J's restaurant (Bloomfield) at 8:00 AM. All interested men are invited; being a member of the church is not a requirement. For this period, the men meet **March 29** and **April 26**.

March & April Specific Calendar Events:

Sunday, March 1:

- * First Sunday in Lent and the start of Pastor Sue's Gospel lessons: "Conversations with Jesus."

Thursday, March 5:

- * Lenten Bible Study in the church's Fellowship Hall at 6:30 PM

Sunday, March 8:

- * Daylight Savings Time starts. Don't forget to set your clocks one hour ahead ("spring forward").

Thursday, March 12:

- * Lenten Bible Study in the church's Fellowship Hall at 6:30 PM

Tuesday, March 17:

- * Saint Patrick's Day

Thursday, March 19:

- * Book club meets in the church Memorial Room at 10:30 AM; they will discuss *Inheriting Edith* by Zoe Fishman.

Goodreads synopsis: For years, Maggie Sheets has been an invisible hand in the glittering homes of wealthy New York City clients, scrubbing, dusting, mopping, and doing all she can to keep her head above water as a single mother. Everything changes when a former employer dies leaving Maggie a staggering inheritance. A house in Sag Harbor. The catch? It comes with an inhabitant: The deceased's eighty-two-year old mother Edith.

Edith has Alzheimer's—or so the doctors tell her—but she remembers exactly how her daughter Liza could light up a room, or bring dark clouds in her wake. And now Liza's gone, by her own hand, and Edith has been left—like a chaise or strand of pearls—to a poorly dressed young woman with a toddler in tow.

Maggie and Edith are both certain this arrangement will be an utter disaster. But as summer days wane, a tenuous bond forms, and Edith, who feels the urgency of her diagnosis, shares a secret that she's held close for five decades, launching Maggie on a mission that might just lead them each to what they are looking for.

- * Lenten Bible Study in the church's Fellowship Hall at 6:30 PM

Thursday, March 26:

- * Lenten Bible Study in the church's Fellowship Hall at 6:30 PM

Friday, March 27:

- * Free Friday Supper - 5:00-6:30 PM. This The dinner is offered free to the community on the last Friday of the month (January through April). The meal is open to all who would like to attend; everyone is welcome. Handicap parking is available in the parking lot off of 5 & 20.

Thursday, April 2:

- * Lenten Bible Study in the church's Fellowship Hall at 6:30 PM

Sunday, April 5:

Thursday, April 9:

* Maundy Thursday worship service 7:00 PM

Friday, April 10:

* Good Friday worship service 7:00 PM

Sunday, April 12:

He is risen!

**Thursday, April 16:**

* Book club meets in the Memorial room – 10:30 AM; they will discuss *Maid* by Stephanie Land.

Goodreads synopsis: Stephanie Land's memoir about working as a maid; a beautiful and gritty exploration of poverty in America. Includes a foreword by Barbara Ehrenreich.

"My daughter learned to walk in a homeless shelter."

While the gap between upper middle-class Americans and the working poor widens, grueling low-wage domestic and service work--primarily done by women--fuels the economic success of the wealthy. Stephanie Land worked for years as a maid, pulling long hours while struggling as a single mom to keep a roof over her daughter's head. In *Maid*, she reveals the dark truth of what it takes to survive and thrive in today's inequitable society.

While she worked hard to scratch her way out of poverty as a single parent, scrubbing the toilets of the wealthy, navigating domestic labor jobs, higher education, assisted housing, and a tangled web of government assistance, Stephanie wrote. She wrote the true stories that weren't being told. The stories of overworked and underpaid Americans.

Written in honest, heart-rending prose and with great insight, *Maid* explores the underbelly of upper-middle class America and the reality of what it's like to be in service to them. "I'd become a nameless ghost," Stephanie writes. With this book, she gives voice to the "servant" worker, those who fight daily to scramble and scrape by for their own lives and the lives of their children.

Friday, April 24:

* Free Friday Supper - 5:00-6:30 PM. This The dinner is offered free to the community on the last Friday of the month (January through April). The meal is open to all who would like to attend; everyone is welcome. Handicap parking is available in the parking lot off of 5 & 2

Sunday, April 26:

* Chicken BBQ fundraiser - 11-4:00 PM at Shivers (on the corner of routes 5 & 20 and 64).

Lent	First reading	Psalm	Second reading	Gospel
First Sunday in Lent March 1, 2020	Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7	Psalm 32	Romans 5:12-19	Matthew 4:1-11
Second Sunday in Lent March 8, 2020	Genesis 12:1-4a	Psalm 121	Romans 4:1-5, 13-17	John 3:1-17 or <i>Matthew 17:1-9</i>
Third Sunday in Lent March 15, 2020	Exodus 17:1-7	Psalm 95	Romans 5:1-11	John 4:5-42
Fourth Sunday in Lent March 22, 2020	1 Samuel 16:1-13	Psalm 23	Ephesians 5:8-14	John 9:1-41
Annunciation of the Lord March 25, 2020	Isaiah 7:10-14	Psalm 45 or <i>Psalm 40:5-10</i>	Hebrews 10:4-10	Luke 1:26-38
Fifth Sunday in Lent March 29, 2020	Ezekiel 37:1-14	Psalm 130	Romans 8:6-11	John 11:1-45
Liturgy of the Palms April 5, 2020 <i>Sixth Sunday in Lent</i>		Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29	Matthew 21:1-11	
Holy Week	First reading	Psalm	Second reading	Gospel
Maundy Thursday April 9, 2020 <i>Holy Thursday</i>	Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14	Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19	1 Corinthians 11:23-26	John 13:1-17, 31b-35
Good Friday April 10, 2020	Isaiah 52:13-53:12	Psalm 22	Hebrews 10:16-25 or <i>Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9</i>	John 18:1-19:42
Easter	First reading	Psalm	Second reading	Gospel
Resurrection of the Lord April 12, 2020 <i>Easter Day</i>	*Acts 10:34-43 or <i>Jeremiah 31:1-6</i>	Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24	Colossians 3:1-4 or <i>Acts 10:34-43</i>	John 20:1-18 or <i>Matthew 28:1-10</i>
Second Sunday of Easter April 19, 2020	*Acts 2:14a, 22-32	Psalm 16	1 Peter 1:3-9	John 20:19-31
Third Sunday of Easter April 26, 2020	*Acts 2:14a, 36-41	Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19	1 Peter 1:17-23	Luke 24:13-35
<i>Italicized readings, complementary to the standard reading, may be used with, or in place of it.</i>				

Church Membership:

Please call Pastor Sue Walters at (716) 983-5760 or e-mail her at revst88@gmail.com for information on joining the First Congregational Church of East Bloomfield or to arrange Home Communion for a shut in.

Advertising Your Church Event:

To advertise any church event, please contact Alice McConnell, 8291 Wesley Road, Bloomfield, 14469; (585) 703-1449 or e-mail her at beehive270@gmail.com. Please ensure you get the written details of the event to Alice 4 weeks before the date of the event.

First Congregational Church
of East Bloomfield
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