



## Gabriel's Horn Newsletter

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

**Website:**

[www.eastbloomfieldcongregationalchurch.org](http://www.eastbloomfieldcongregationalchurch.org)

**E-mail:** [1st.Cong.Church@gmail.com](mailto:1st.Cong.Church@gmail.com)

**March/April 2025**

**\* Our Sunday worship service begins at 10:00 a.m. \***

### CHURCH STAFF

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Robin Stewart

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*Creator of the universe,  
you made the world in beauty,  
and restore all things in glory  
through the victory of Jesus Christ.  
We pray that, wherever your image is still disfigured  
by poverty, sickness, selfishness, war, and greed,  
the new creation in Jesus Christ may appear in justice, love, and peace,  
to the glory of your name. Amen.*

## ✦ From the Pastor ✦

“Jesus walked this lonesome valley; he had to walk it by himself. O, nobody else could walk it for him; he had to walk it by himself.”

~ American Folk Hymn; African American spiritual: *Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley*



This is the in between time, this time between the beginning of Lent (on March 5th) and the celebration of Easter on April 20th. It is hard to write a column that covers all of these events, not to mention Jesus' journey from Palm Sunday through Easter Sunday morning.

I'd like to focus not just on Jesus' journey, but on his companions on the journey ... or lack of them. He may have been followed by disciples, but they did not understand what it meant for him to “set his face towards Jerusalem.” (Luke 9:51). They did not understand the depth of his commitment to God and to presenting

God's love to all God's people. They did not understand what it meant for him to heal the sick or eat with sinners. While they may have given lip service to his identity, saying, “Truly, you are the Son of God,” (Matthew 14:33), the fullness of that identity escaped them.

In other words, Jesus walked this lonesome valley by himself. While there were those who offered some support, he was very much alone except for the presence of His Father. There is something to be said for walking through events of our lives by ourselves. Yes, it may feel incredibly lonely, but it can be very frustrating to try to explain to others why you are doing what you are doing. When we are alone, we don't have to explain ourselves to anyone. We can listen for God's voice speaking to us, without the confusion and distraction of others. And there are times, even in the church life, that lend themselves to being alone. Lent is one of those times. We can sit and read. We can pray. We can read our devotionals, our Bibles, and spend time reflecting on them in silence. There is something about this time of year that encourages solitariness.

If you feel so inclined, consider spending some intentional time alone this Lent. I've offered some suggestions as to what to do with that time or you may have other practices that bring you peace. Either way, may you find your own way to walk with Jesus through this time of the church year.

Blessings,

*Sue*

## ✦ Upcoming Events ✦

- **Last Friday Supper:** The last two free Friday suppers this season will be on **March 28th** and **April 25th**. Both dinners will begin at 5:00 p.m. and service will be until 6:30 p.m. (or when food runs out). This is a free meal open to the community and all are welcome.
- **Grace Gospel Choir:** We are honored to host the Grace Choir as they sing a selection of gospel hymns by Fanny Crosby. Grace Choir is an interdenominational, community-based Christian choir under the direction of Dr. Lon Beery and seeks to demonstrate the unity of the body of Christ through shared ministry. The choir will present a selection of gospel hymns by Fanny Crosby interspersed with a hymn sing-along that encourages audience participation. The concert is on Sunday, **March 9th at 4:00 p.m.** A truly special part of this presentation is that nine members of our congregation are in the Grace Choir and so will have the pleasure of presenting this inspirational music to their fellow congregants. Please join us!
- **Easter Holy Week Celebrations:** We will join our across-the-way sister church, the East Bloomfield United Methodist Church, in Holy Week observances. This year's Ash Wednesday service is on **March 5th at 7:00 p.m.** in our sanctuary, the Methodist church will host a Maundy Thursday service on **April 17th at 7:00 p.m.** in their sanctuary and we will return to our church on Friday, **April 18th at 7:00 p.m.** for a Good Friday service. Both churches will hold an Easter service in their respective sanctuaries on Easter Sunday (**April 20th**) at regular worship times. Please join us as we celebrate the season.

*Holy God, mighty and immortal,  
you are beyond our knowing,  
yet we see your glory in the face of Jesus Christ,  
whose compassion illumines the world.  
Transform us into the likeness of the love of Christ,  
who renewed our humanity so that we may share in his divinity,  
the same Jesus Christ, our Lord,  
who live and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*



## ✦ Birthdays ✦

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



### March:

6 - Robin Stewart  
12 - Joe Walters, Jr.  
28 - Will Tyler

### April:

12 - Bob Kelly

## ✦ Reoccurring Calendar Events (Monthly) ✦

● **Special Offering:** An extra offering plate is passed on the first Sunday of every month. This special offering supports church outreach to the local community and local missions and is kept in the Benevolence Fund for future distributions. The offering basket will be available at our live service. For this period, the special offerings will be on **March 2nd**, and **April 6th**. If you are unable to attend, please contact Janice Kelly, our Benevolence Secretary, to make arrangements for your gift.

Please note that if you are unable to attend worship service yet wish to make a donation to the church (pledge, benevolence or faith), you can mail your donation to Marilyn Shafer at 12 Howard Avenue, Bloomfield, NY, 14469.

● **Council Meeting:** The church council meetings will be **March 2nd**, and **April 6th**. These meetings will start after the regular Sunday worship service.

● **Woman's Breakfast:** Meets the first Monday of every month at **Brady J's** restaurant (24 Maple Avenue, Bloomfield) at **9:00 a.m.** All interested women are invited; being a member of the church is not a requirement. For this period, the breakfasts will be on **March 3rd**, and **April 7th**.

● **Choir Practice:** The choir has weekly Wednesday rehearsals at 7:30 p.m. For those who cannot make it Wednesday evenings, there is a short rehearsal at 9:15 a.m. on Sundays. As always, they are looking for singers and all are welcome.

● **Men's Breakfast:** The men meet the last Sunday of every month at **Brady J's** restaurant (24 Maple Avenue, Bloomfield) at **7:45 a.m.** All interested men are invited; being a member of the church isn't a requirement. For this period, the men will meet **March 30th**, and **April 27th**.

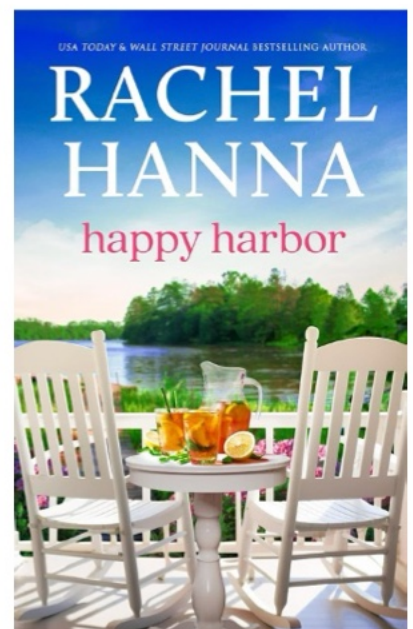
### ✦ **March and April Specific Calendar Events** ✦

- **Sunday, March 2 (after the worship service):** Church council meeting
- **Monday, March 3 (9:00 a.m.):** Women's breakfast at Brady J's
- **Tuesday, March 4:** Shrove Tuesday/Mardi Gras
- **Wednesday, April 5:** Ash Wednesday  
(church service in our sanctuary at 7:00 p.m.)
- **Wednesday, March 5:** Lent begins
- **Sunday, March 9:** Grace Choir concert (4:00 p.m.)
- **Sunday, March 9:** Daylight Saving Time begins (move clocks forward)
- **Monday, March 17:** Saint Patrick's Day
- **Thursday, March 20:** Spring Equinox
- **Thursday, March 20 (9:30 a.m.):** The church book club meets in Pastor Sue's office; they will discuss the novel *Happy Harbor* by Rachel Hanna.

#### **Amazon synopsis:**

Josie Campbell has spent her entire adult life distancing herself from her childhood in the small Southern town of Happy Harbor. Growing up with an alcoholic mother who was either absent or scandalizing the town with her antics, all Josie ever wanted was to escape to somewhere no one knew her as Diane's daughter. Now, she finally has it all—a great job, a condo in one of Atlanta's most desirable areas, a successful fiancé, and her teenage daughter, Kendra, enrolled at a top-rated school.

But when that life falls apart, and her beloved nana dies, Josie is





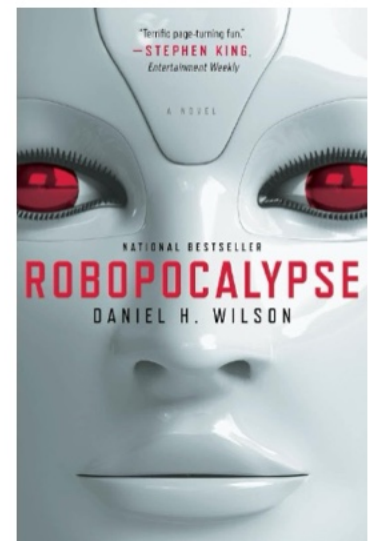
forced to return to the one place she never wanted to visit again. Soon, she finds herself stepping into Nana's shoes in Happy Harbor: running her quaint restaurant, living in their family's historic home, and bumping into Walker Jackson—the disturbingly handsome man who lives in the guest house—on a near daily basis. All of which sounds idyllic, if it weren't for the painful memories lurking around every corner. Still, the place seems to be good for Kendra, who begs to stay, and Josie is inclined to at least make an attempt at a new life in this old town.

That is, until her mother turns up. Diane insists she's truly sober now and wants just one more chance. Nana's last wish was for the two of them to reconcile, and she's even arranged things to help make that happen. But with a lifetime of painful experiences that have taught her not to trust this woman, can Josie truly bring herself to forgive Diane?

- **Friday, March 28:** Free Friday supper (5:00 - 6:30 p.m.)
- **Sunday, March 30 (7:45 a.m.):** Men's breakfast at Brady J's
- **Tuesday, April 1:** April Fools' Day
- **Sunday, April 6 (after the worship service):** Church council meeting
- **Monday, April 7 (9:00 a.m.):** Women's breakfast at Brady J's
- **Tuesday, April 13:** Palm Sunday
- **Tuesday, April 15:** Tax Day
- **Thursday, April 17:** Maundy Thursday (church service at 7:00 p.m. at the East Bloomfield United Methodist Church)
- **Thursday, April 17 (9:30 a.m.):** The church book club meets in Pastor Sue's office; they will discuss the novel *Robopocalypse* by Daniel H. Wilson.

### **Amazon synopsis:**

Not far into our future, the dazzling technology that runs our world turns against us. Controlled by a childlike—yet massively powerful—artificial intelligence known as Archos, the global network of machines on which our world has grown dependent suddenly becomes an implacable, deadly foe. At Zero Hour—the moment the robots attack—the human race is almost annihilated, but as its scattered remnants regroup, humanity for the first time unites in a determined effort to fight back. This is the oral history of that conflict, told by an international cast of survivors who experienced



this long and bloody confrontation with the machines. Brilliantly conceived and amazingly detailed, *Robocalypse* is an action-packed epic with chilling implications about the real technology that surrounds us.

- **Friday, April 18:** Good Friday (church service in our sanctuary at 7:00 p.m.)
- **Sunday, April 20:** Easter Sunday



- **Friday, April 25:** Free Friday supper (5:00 - 6:30 p.m.)
- **Friday, April 25:** Arbor Day
- **Sunday, April 27 (7:45 a.m.):** Men's breakfast at Brady J's



## ✦ Miscellaneous ✦

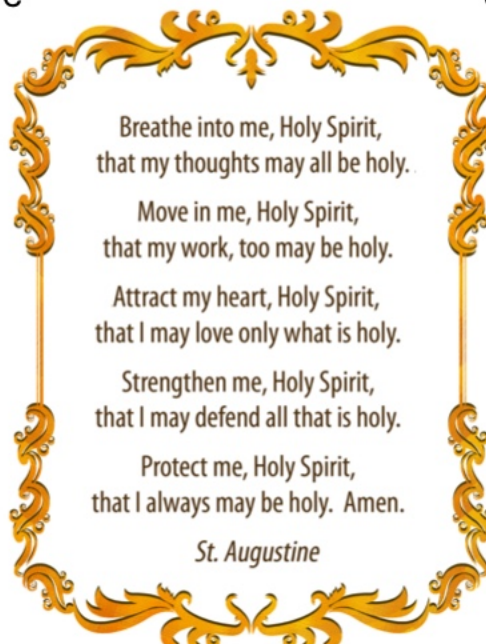
● **Pastor Office Hours:** Pastor Sue has open door office hours every Thursday. She leads morning prayer from her office beginning at 9:00 a.m. which is streamed live on the church's Facebook page. Pastor Sue will remain in her office until 1:00 p.m. and, as always, drop-ins for a cup of coffee or tea are welcome. She is also available at other times by appointment; please call (716) 983-5760 to make arrangements.

● **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 A Church Event:** To advertise any church event, please contact Alice McConnell, 8291 Wesley Road, Bloomfield, 14469; (585) 402-5397 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.

● **Worship Services:** For those who cannot attend the in-person service, we continue to record and post portions of the worship service on our Facebook page. Please note the posts are audio only (similar to a podcast) and we are recording only the scripture readings and the sermon (and sometimes the song offering from the choir). The podcasts can be listened to at any time (along with all the other videos we've posted) by accessing the Video tab on our Facebook page (link: <https://www.facebook.com/First-Congregational-Church-Bloomfield-NY-357770224341588/>).

● **Food Cupboard:** As a continuing reminder, please keep the food cupboard's needs in your minds and hearts. We collect/ deliver for the cupboard on a monthly basis, however, donations are welcome at any time.





## ✦ November/December Lectionary Reading ✦

	First reading	Psalm	Second reading	Gospel
<b>Transfiguration Sunday</b> Sunday, March 2, 2025	Exodus 34:29-35	Psalm 99	2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2	Luke 9:28-36, (37-43a)
<b>Ash Wednesday</b> (Lent begins) March 5, 2025	Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or <i>Isaiah 58:1-12</i>	Psalm 51:1-17	2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10	Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21
<b>Sunday</b> March 9, 2025	Deuteronomy 26:1-11	Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16	Romans 10:8b-13	Luke 4:1-13
<b>Sunday</b> March 16, 2025	Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18	Psalm 27	Philippians 3:17-4:1	Luke 13:31-35 or <i>Luke 9:28-36,</i> <i>(37-43a)</i>
<b>Sunday</b> March 23, 2025	Isaiah 55:1-9	Psalm 63:1-8	1 Corinthians 10:1-13	Luke 13:1-9
<b>Sunday</b> March 30, 2025	Joshua 5:9-12	Psalm 32	2 Corinthians 5:16-21	Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32
<b>Sunday</b> April 6, 2025	Isaiah 43:16-21	Psalm 126	Philippians 3:4b-14	John 12:1-8
<b>Palm Sunday</b> April 13, 2025	Isaiah 50:4-9a	Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 or Psalm 31:9-16	Philippians 2:5-11	Luke 19:28-40 or Luke 22:14-23:56 or <i>Luke 23:1-49</i>
<b>Maundy Thursday</b> April 17, 2025	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
<b>Good Friday</b> April 18, 2025	Isaiah 52:13-53:12	Psalm 22	Hebrews 10:16-25 or <i>Hebrews 4:14-16;</i> <i>5:7-9</i>	John 18:1-19:42
<b>Easter Sunday</b> April 20, 2025	* Acts 10:34-43 or <i>Isaiah 65:17-25</i>	Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24	1 Corinthians 15:19-26 or <i>Acts 10:34-43</i>	John 20:1-18 or <i>Luke 24:1-12</i>
<b>Sunday</b> April 27, 2025	Acts 5:27-32	Psalm 118:14-29 or <i>Psalm 150</i>	Revelation 1:4-8	John 20:19-31

First Congregational Church  
of East Bloomfield  
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