



Gabriel's Horn Newsletter

Heralding the Good News to our neighbors

Sunday Service @ 10:00 A.M.
March/April 2019

<http://www.eastbloomfieldcongregationalchurch.org>

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Reminder!!

*Daylight Savings Time begins
March 10! Set your clocks ahead one hour!*

A note from the editor...

Max Lucado's book *Six Hours One Friday* speaks to us of God's incredible plan.

"He humbled himself and was fully obedient to God, even when that caused his death—death on a cross.

Philippians 2:8

When human hands fastened the divine hands to a cross with spikes, it wasn't the soldiers who held the hands of Jesus steady. It was God who held them steady. Those same hands that designed the dawn and crafted each cloud. Those same hands that blueprinted one incredible plan for you and me.

Take a stroll out to the hill. Out to Calvary. Out to the cross where, with holy blood, the hand that placed you on the planet wrote the promise, 'God would give up his only Son before he'd give up on you.'"

So—wow—for me Jesus stretched out his arms and died. For me! That *IS* an incredible plan. When I think of it, I am drawn to realize I must react. Our world today it scary! Politically, racially, economically we are at odds with one another. During our Lenten journey let's take time to listen to one another, to recognize we don't have all the answers, to try to understand what is behind thoughts and ideas that seem wrong to us. We are a part of God's plan, He died for us! Let's live for Him.

Easter blessings, Phyllis

PASTORS' COLUMN

From the pen of Rev. Sandy Porrey



March 6th is Ash Wednesday and is the first day of the 2019 Lenten season. This year our service will include the imposition of ashes. Christians receive a mark of ashes on their forehead as a

token of penitence and mortality. Lent is the period of 40 days which comes before Easter and is a season of reflection and preparation. By observing Lent, Christians replicate Jesus Christ's sacrifice and withdrawal into the desert for 40 days. Lujza will be bringing her cactus garden in for us so we will have a visual reminder of the "wilderness".

I love the season of Lent because I believe it is a time during the year which specifically invites us to strive for a higher level of spiritual discipline in our daily lives. I usually spend some time before Lent discerning if I will be giving something up, or taking something on. But whatever you or I decide to do on our Lenten journeys, let us choose something which will help us become more Christ-like in our thoughts, words and deeds.

As we enter this Lenten season please consider this. The more effort we put in to these 40 days to reflect on Christ's sacrifice and prepare for his coming, the more glorious and joyous our Easter celebrations will be. And not just for one day, but for a lifetime.

Happy Easter and God bless!

Sandy

From the pen of Pastor Andy Schaefer



Before I formed you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.

Then I said, "Ah, Lord God! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy." But the Lord said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a boy'; for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and you shall speak whatever I command you.

Then the Lord put out his hand and touched my mouth; and the Lord said to me, "Now I have put my words in your mouth. - Jeremiah 1:5-7, 9

I wonder how many of us think the way Jeremiah does. I often do. I sharply feel the calling of God, while just as sharply feeling my weaknesses and limitations. Like Jeremiah, I claim my shortcomings, "I don't have the right skills. I don't have the time, money or energy," or the opposite of what Jeremiah says, "I'm too old!" I confess that I'm feeling that one more and more. "Just you wait, kid!" I hear you all collectively say.

I know we also think this way as a body, "Our church is too small. Our resources are too limited," and, again, "our congregation too old."

All of these are legitimate concerns; realities that must be taken into account whenever we are called to give of ourselves in ministry. We recently had an opportunity that sounded like a great way to help people in desperate need, but upon learning more of what would be asked of us, we had to decline. It would have taken too much out of us, and we would not have been able to provide the kind of care that was called for. In other words, nobody would have been blessed.

The funny thing is that we seem, like Jeremiah, to think that God is entirely ignorant of these limitations; as if we have handed God a resume that shows we are highly competent basket weavers, which God then tosses aside unread and offers a

job manufacturing parts for the international space station.

We forget that God knows us more intimately than we know ourselves. Jeremiah heard it many times as he grew up, as have many of us: "For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb." (Ps. 139:13) We don't have to educate God on our strengths and weaknesses – God knows them all because God put us together; with the both the capacity to soar like an eagle, and the potential to fall on our faces.

The Bible is chock-full of people who were too old or too young, to rich or too poor, too hot-headed or too timid, too entrenched in the status quo or too far out on the fringe, too...whatever...to be taken seriously as messengers and workers in God's Realm. And yet God chose and used them, and we read about them and learn from them every Sunday. There are very few heroes or heroines in the Bible who did not fall short in one way or another; who by human standards would be considered not quite up to snuff, but to whom God said, "You're the one. Do not be afraid. I will be with you and I will give you all you need."

Nine years ago, you offered me a position as a contemporary worship leader. If I had really known what that called for, what talents and skills it required that I seem to sorely lack, I would have been much more hesitant to take the position. And yet, I quickly found that each member of the Voices of Faith praise band contributes to the task, sometimes in ways I did not anticipate. The result is that our third Sunday services may not be "Contemporary" by usual standards, but God uses all of us (including you folks in the congregation) to create a worship experience that is unique and uplifting.

So, when you feel personally inadequate, when you feel our church is defeated, think of your brothers and sisters who join with you on Sunday morning. The greatest gift, the greatest resource, is sitting next to you in your pew, or over on the other side of the church. And next to you in the

pew, or over on the other side of the church, someone is looking at you the same way.

Let us be courageous and bold. Let us trust in God. Let us love one another and the world.

Peace,

Andy

ANNOUNCEMENTS, PRAYER, MINISTRY AND HUMOR

Church Membership

Please contact Rev. Sandy Porrey at (585) 773-8512 or Sanders74@juno.com for information on joining the First Congregational Church of East Bloomfield or arranging for Home Communion for a shut-in.

Help Needed—Help Needed
Check out the signup sheets
in Fellowship Hall







March








2 Rebecca Schaefer
6 Robin Stewart
28 Will Tyler
29 Larry Messner
31 Cheryl Glamack

April

10 Rachael Schaefer
12 Bob Kelly
21 Mara Glamack

Upcoming Events

Choir Everyone is welcome to sing.	Wednesday night rehearsals resume at 7:30-9:00
Mar 1	World Day of Prayer
Mar 3	-Transfiguration of Our Lord -Women's Breakfast, 8:00 @ Brady J's -First Sunday Food Basket & special offering. -Council meeting
Mar 6 	Ash Wednesday service 7:00 pm
Mar 10  	-Daylight Savings time begins -First Sunday in Lent
Mar 17  	-Second Sunday in Lent -Contemporary service at 10:00 AM in Fellowship Hall
Mar 20	First day of Spring
Mar 21	Book Club, 2;30 – 3:30, Manhattan Beach, Jennifer Egan
Mar 24 	Third Sunday in Lent

Mar 31 	-Fourth Sunday in Lent -Men's Breakfast 7:45 @ Brady J's.
Apr 7 	-Fifth Sunday in Lent -Women's Breakfast, 8:00 @ Brady J's -First Sunday Food Basket & special offering. -Council meeting
Apr 14 	Palm Sunday
Apr 16	Newsletter Deadline for May/June 2019
Apr 18 	- Book Club 2:30-3:30, Homer and the Holiday Miracle, Gwen Cooper -Maundy Thursday service 7:00 pm.
Apr 19 	Good Friday service 7:00 pm.
Apr 21  	-Easter Sunday -Contemporary service at 10:00 AM in Fellowship Hall
April 26	Last Friday Supper 5-6:30 (This is the final Last Friday supper of the year)
Apr 28	Men's Breakfast 7:45 @ Brady J's.

PEWPOINTS

Lectionary Readings Mar/Apr 2018

March 3, Exodus 34:29-35, Psalm 99, 2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2, Luke 9:28-36, (37-43a)

March 6, Ash Wednesday, Joel 2:1-2, 12-17, Psalm 51:1-17, 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10, Matthew 6:1-6, March 10, First Sunday in Lent, Deuteronomy 26:1-11, Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16, Romans 10:8b-13, Luke 4:1-13:16-21

March 17, Second Sunday in Lent, Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18, Psalm 27, Philippians 3:17-4:1, Luke 13:31-35

March 24, Third Sunday in Lent, Isaiah 55:1-9, Psalm 63:1-8, 1 Corinthians 10:1-13, Luke 13:1-9

March 31, Fourth Sunday in Lent, Joshua 5:9-12, Psalm 32, 2 Corinthians 5:16-21, Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

April 7, Fifth Sunday in Lent, Isaiah 43:16-21, Psalm 126, Philippians 3:4b-14, John 12:1-8

April 14, Sixth Sunday in Lent, Isaiah 50:4-9a, Psalm 31:9-16, Philippians 2:5-11, Luke 22:14-23:56

Holy Week

April 15, Isaiah 42:1-9, Psalm 36:5-11, Hebrews 9:11-15, John 12:1-11

April 16, Isaiah 49:1-7, Psalm 71:1-14, 1 Corinthians 1:18-31, John 12:20-36

April 17, Isaiah 50:4-9a, Psalm 70, Hebrews 12:1-3, John 13:21-32

April 18, Maundy Thursday, 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

April 19, Good Friday, Isaiah 52:13-53:12, Psalm 22, Hebrews 10:16-25, John 18:1-19:42

April 20, Job 14:1-14, Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16, 1 Peter 4:1-8, Matthew 27:57-66

April 21, Easter Day, Acts 10:34-43, Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24, 1 Corinthians 15:19-26, John 20:1-18

April 28, Acts 5:27-32, Psalm 118:14-29, Revelation 1:4-8, John 20:19-31

How to advertise your church event

To advertise any church event contact Alice McConnell, 8291 Wesley Road, Bloomfield, 14469; 703-1449 or beehive270@gmail.com. Please give the written details to Alice 4 weeks before the date of the event.

Phyllis Rehtin will handle information for the Newsletter, the website and Bloomfield Buzz. Keep in mind our issues are published every 2 months, so you should think ahead to have the event included in the correct newsletter. (Phyllis Rehtin, 6700 Rice Rd., Victor, NY 14564; rehtin@rochester.rr.com or 657-7018).

The Ties That Bind



“Prayer should be the key of the day and the lock of the night.”

During March and April, the congregation prays for Judd & Lujza Rockcastle, Janice & Bob Kelly, Sandy Porrey, William Bacon and Marilyn Shafer.

Remember our members and friends who cannot be with us on Sunday morning: Dorothy and Bob Hodges and Richard Gladding, Mona Eddy's brother, Norma, Nick Glamack's mom and Kathrine, Donna Messner's mom.

Pray for Dick McConnell, Alice McConnell's brother-in-law, Kent Garfinkle (Doogie), Andy Schaefer's classmate, Logan Clark, Bev Clark's grandson, Cheryl Glamack and Bob Kelly.

Book Club

March 21, Manhattan Beach, Jennifer Egan

An Amazon Best Book of October 2017: “With Manhattan Beach, Jennifer Egan—who dazzled readers with her Pulitzer Prize-winning, *A Visit from the Goon Squad*—spins a classic historical novel.

Classic in the sense that it's virtually impossible to put down. Classic in its sepia-toned portrait of New York: set on the Brooklyn docks during World War II, when mobsters ruled, the war loomed, and a young girl dove her way into becoming the first female diver on the squad. Classic in its quintessentially satisfying characters: crooked gangsters, disappearing fathers, gritty sailors and an intrepid young woman equally at home in a 200 pound diving suit and a green silk dress who unites them all. Classic in its revelation of the dangerous, altruistic and nefarious choices people make to support their family, their country and themselves. Manhattan Beach is classic in all of its American glory." —Al Woodworth

April 18, 2019, Homer and the Holiday Miracle, A true story, Gwen Cooper
Reader's review: "Absolutely loved the short story! Gwen Cooper is my favorite cat author and she personally responds to her readers and does so much charity work to help cats. This story tells of her last days with Homer the blind wonder cat. A very heartwarming tale and comical excerpts of a tiny blind cat who stole everyone's hearts. I believe everyone who has ever had a cat can relate to the emotions you feel reading these experiences."

The comfort of our middle-C God

During college, while living in a boarding house, author Lloyd Douglas befriended a retiree. The man, a homebound former music teacher, shared a morning ritual with Douglas, who would walk down to the man's floor, open his door and ask, "What's the good news?"

Every day the man responded by tapping a tuning fork against his wheelchair and saying, "That's middle C. It was middle C yesterday. It will be middle C tomorrow. It will be middle C a thousand years from now. The tenor upstairs sings flat, the piano across the hall is out of tune, but, my friend, that is middle C!"

If middle C's pitch value isn't exactly 261.63 Hz, then your piano needs to be

tuned. How comforting that dependability is for musicians — and their listeners.

Like middle C, God is steadfast and reliable. In this fast-paced world, praise God for the good news he declares to us: "I the LORD do not change" (Malachi 3:6).

Faith journey

A family was heading on vacation: two little ones were nestled in car seats; the van was packed. As Dad locked the house and Mom secured the garage, an adult neighbor the kids knew walked up and spoke through an open window. "Where are you going?" The kids shrugged. "Well, what road are you taking?" the friend asked with a knowing smile. Of course, they had no idea. "Do you know where you'll eat today, or where you'll spend the night?" Blank stares. Then the friend asked, "Who are you traveling with?" The children broke into grins and shouted, "Mommy and Daddy!"

On the journey of faith, we don't know precisely where we're headed or how all our needs will be met. But we know who we're traveling with: our loving God who is fully aware of the twists and turns ahead; the loving Parent who promises to care for us wherever we go.

Vulnerable yet victorious

While taking boxing lessons, Timothy Keller was warned to never put his hands at his side. That position leaves one's face and torso exposed to the opponent.

In a video on ChurchLeaders.com, the pastor and author notes that Jesus' hands weren't just out to the side on the cross; they were nailed there. "How much more vulnerable could he be?" That vulnerability, Keller says, makes Jesus' death the ultimate act of friendship, which should encourage people who feel far from God.

Defining friendship as candor and consistency, Keller notes that friends always let you in, never let you down and always

have time for you. Jesus didn't let us down on Good Friday — or on Easter. Although Jesus "had all of hell coming down on him," Keller says, our Savior proclaimed to his Father, "Not my will but thine be done."

What Easter does

Jesus' resurrection from the dead is life-changing and life-giving for his followers. But, as Henry Knox Sherrill notes, Easter's "joyful news ... does not change the contemporary world." On earth, we still must deal with sin, pain, death and brokenness. And "still before us lie work, discipline, sacrifice," Sherrill adds. What Easter does, though, is provide Christians with "the spiritual power to do the work, accept the discipline and make the sacrifice."

By defeating the grave, Jesus empowers us to bear our worldly troubles with joy, peace and hope. His resurrection assures us that trials, tears and suffering are only temporary, while eternal victory and life with Jesus are permanent.

Meanings in the meal

Jesus instituted Communion while celebrating the Jewish Passover with his disciples. The meal's ritual foods hold meaning for Christians, too, because our faith story is interwoven with that of Judaism.

Matzoh: This unraised bread recalls the Israelites' hasty departure from oppression in Egypt. Jesus used the Passover bread to symbolize his body, which delivers us from bondage to sin and death.

Salt water: It symbolizes the tears of the Hebrews and of all who suffer in any time and place. Christians believe that in Jesus, God embraced human suffering so we need never face it alone.

Parsley: Dipped in the salt water, this green, leafy vegetable represents the Hebrews' rebirth out of sorrow into the joy of freedom. Easter's celebration of resurrection proclaims a coming day when God "will wipe

every tear from [our] eyes [and] there will be no more death" (Revelation 21:4, NIV).

Shankbone: A lamb slaughtered for each Hebrew household meant life for those within. The meat strengthened them for the escape journey, and the blood, swabbed on their doorframe, signaled for Death to "pass over." Jesus used wine at the Passover meal to symbolize his blood — of the Lamb of God — which he would shed for our salvation.

Egg: For Jews celebrating Passover, an egg symbolizes memory of the Exodus and renewal of faith. For Christians at Easter, eggs — especially open, empty ones — call to mind Jesus' empty tomb, renewal and abundant life.

Let laughter 'spring' forth!

"Spring is when you feel like whistling, even with a shoe full of slush." (Doug Larson)

"Easter is the only time when it's perfectly safe to put all of your eggs in one basket." (Evan Esar)

"Spring is the time of year when it is summer in the sun and winter in the shade." (Charles Dickens)

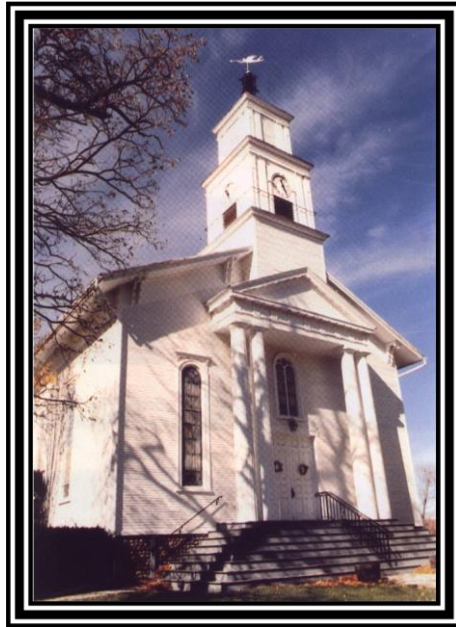
"The world is mud-luscious and puddle wonderful." (e.e. cummings)

"In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt." (Margaret Atwood)





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