



Gabriel's Horn Newsletter

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

Website:

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March/April 2024

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

CHURCH STAFF

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Thursday, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

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✦ From the Pastor ✦

³⁷Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." ³⁸ Pilate asked him, "What is truth?"

Jesus Sentenced to Death

After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him"

John 18:37-38

NRSVue

Truth. It's a hard concept. Here we have Jesus telling Pilate that he was born and came into the world to testify to the truth. Pilate asks him, "What is truth?" Jesus does not reply. Pilate is left to figure it out on his own. We are never sure, from the Biblical accounts that he does. He rather hedges his bets, incase what Jesus said was in fact the truth. He tells the Jews there is no case against Jesus. He tells the truth. There never was a truthful case against Jesus. All the accusations that were made against him were either fabrications or his own words, twisted by those who wished to see him crucified. His truth was not one many people wanted to embrace. It scared those in power. It scared the religious elite. It scared the scribes and Pharisees, who were absolutely certain they had the corner on the truth.

Each of these groups was threatened by the truth Jesus proclaimed. How dare he heal the blind, make the lame to walk and eat with sinners? Who gave him that authority? The only one who had that kind of power was God himself. And, the only people who were truly spokespeople for God were the Old Testament prophets, like Moses and Elijah. Didn't they, the Pharisees, follow the Law of Moses? Didn't they believe in the truth? Yes, they did...as far as it went. What they were not able to wrap their minds around was that God might have updated the truth. God always loved sinners, had compassion on the blind and the lame, and sought to have his followers do the same. But, the prophets who proclaimed this message were seldom welcomed. They were persecuted, laughed at, and run out of town. Even Moses was questioned by those he led out of slavery.

Then, there was the question of sin and repentance... Because the Pharisees followed the Law of Moses, they did not believe they were sinners. They saw nothing wrong with parading their virtue in the streets, and thanking God for making them high above the sinners. They were convinced this was the truth.

Jesus came to live, die, and rise again for another truth. That truth, which was from the beginning, was that God loves all of us. God does not play favorites. God loves the sinners the same as the saints. God does not have a hierarchy, as the Pharisees believed. We are all equal in God's sight. And, God wants us to spend eternity with him. But, for that to happen, our sins had to be forgiven. The slate had to be wiped clean. So, God sent Jesus to do that. That is God's truth.

Blessings in this month that contains these readings and the joy of Easter,

Sue

*O God, you delight not in pomp and show,
but in a humble and contrite heart.
Overturn our love of worldly possessions
and fix our hearts more firmly on you,
that, having nothing,
we may yet possess everything,
a treasure stored up for us in heaven. Amen.*

✦ Church News & Updates ✦

- **GoodHoly Week Services: Friday Service:** Pastor Sue will have a Maundy Thursday service on **Thursday, March 28th**. This service will be live streamed at 9:00 a.m. on our Facebook page. In addition, Pastor Sue will lead a Good Friday worship service (in the church's sanctuary) on **Friday, March 29th**. The service will begin at 7:00 p.m.
- **Free Friday Suppers:** The church hosts a free dinner on the last Friday of the month January through April. For this period, the supper dates are **Friday, March 22nd** and **Friday, April 26th**; we will be serving dinner from 5 - 6:30 p.m. Please note the March dinner is **not** the last Friday due to our Holy Week and Good Friday activities. The meal is free and open to all in the community, so come and enjoy some good food and fellowship. If you wish to sponsor a meal, or help with preparation or serving, please add your name to the sign up sheet in Fellowship Hall or contact a church member to offer your assistance.
- **Lenten Bible Study:** Pastor Sue leads a Bible study for Lent covering the Gospel of Mark. The group will meet after the worship service beginning February 18th and meet February 25th, **March 10th, March 17th and March 24th**. Each session will be about an hour. There is no sign-up list for the Bible study, please feel free to just come after the service. Pastor Sue hopes to see you there and looks forward to joining in the study and discussion.
- **News From the Trustees:** The trustees continue to oversee many projects that aid in the smooth running of the church. They had the WiFi upgraded (which will facilitate the installation of a Ring doorbell), replaced torn shades in the Fellowship Hall and hired a mason to replace the front walk with paver stones. Lastly for this period, some new light fixtures are to be installed in the basement.
- **News From Christian Education:** Christian Education hosted a historical scavenger hunt for members of the church. The congregation broke into teams and spent some time searching for answers to clues. However, this was a scavenger hunt with a twist - there was no physical object to find, the goal of the hunt was to learn more of the church and it's history. It was a neat way to learn more of our church; all involved had a great time. Our thanks to the member of Christian Ed for a very entertaining - and educational! - activity.
- **Reminder: Women's and Men's Breakfast Dates and Times:** Both the women's and men's breakfast gatherings are permanently changed to Mondays at 9:00 a.m. The women will meet on the first Monday while the men will meet on the last Monday. Both groups will meet at Brady J's restaurant here in Bloomfield (at 24 Maple Avenue). Please note these gatherings are not just for members of the church; all are invited.

**** Crucified and Risen One, by your passion you sustain us when we fall knee-bent into the radical emptiness of bone-wasting sorry and despair. Teach us to sustain the weary and awaken us to attend to those who suffer. Amen.****

✦ Birthdays ✦

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



March	April
6 - Robin Stewart	12 - Bob Kelly
12 - Joe Walters, Jr.	
28 - Will Tyler	

**** 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.****

✦ 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 **Sunday, March 3rd**, and **Sunday, April 7th**. 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.

- **Church Council:** The church council meets the first Sunday of each month after regular church services. For this period, the council will meet on **Sunday, March 3rd**, and **Sunday, April 7th**.

- **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 **Monday, March 4th**, and **Monday, April 1st**.

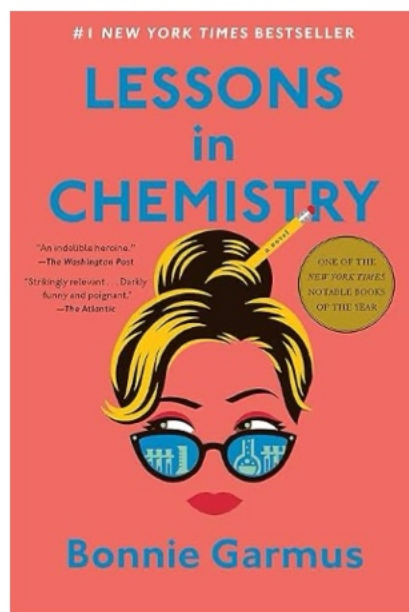
- **Choir Practice:** The choir rehearses every Wednesday evening at 7:30 p.m. In addition, the choir meets on Sundays at 9:15 a.m. for rehearsal. As always, they are looking for singers and all are welcome.

- **Men's Breakfast:** The men meet the last Monday of every month at **Brady J's** restaurant (24 Maple Avenue, Bloomfield) at 9:00 a.m. All interested men are invited; being a member of the church isn't a requirement. For this period, the men will meet on **Monday, March 25th**, and **Monday, April 29**

✦ March and April Specific Calendar Events ✦



- **Sunday, March 3:** Church council meets after the worship service
- **Monday, March 4 (9:00 a.m.):** Women's breakfast at Brady J's
- **Sunday, March 10: Daylight saving time:** remember to set your clock ahead one hour
- **Sunday, March 17:** St. Patrick's Day
- **Thursday, March 21 (9:30 a.m.):** The church book club meets in Pastor Sue's office; they will discuss the novel *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus.



Amazon synopsis:

Chemist Elizabeth Zott is not your average woman. In fact, Elizabeth Zott would be the first to point out that there is no such thing as an average woman. But it's the early 1960s and her all-male team at Hastings Research Institute takes a very unscientific view of equality. Except for one: Calvin Evans; the lonely, brilliant, Nobel-prize nominated grudge-holder who falls in love with—of all things—her mind. True chemistry results.

But like science, life is unpredictable. Which is why a few years later Elizabeth Zott finds herself not only a single mother, but the reluctant star of America's most beloved cooking show *Supper at Six*. Elizabeth's unusual approach to cooking ("combine one tablespoon acetic acid with a pinch of sodium chloride") proves

revolutionary. But as her following grows, not everyone is happy. Because as it turns out, Elizabeth Zott isn't just teaching women to cook. She's daring them to change the status quo.

Laugh-out-loud funny, shrewdly observant, and studded with a dazzling cast of supporting characters, *Lessons in Chemistry* is as original and vibrant as its protagonist.

- **Friday, March 22:** Free Friday supper (5 - 6:30 p.m.) in Fellowship Hall
- **Sunday, March 24:** Palm Sunday
- **Monday, March 25 (9:00 a.m.):** Men's breakfast at Brady J's.
- **Thursday, March 28:** Maundy Thursday. A service will be live streamed on our Facebook page at 9:00 a.m.
- **Friday, March 29:** Good Friday. There is a Good Friday service at 7:00 pm in the sanctuary.
- **Sunday, March 31:** Easter Sunday.



He is risen indeed!

- **Monday, April 1 (9:00 a.m.):** Women's breakfast at Brady J's
- **Sunday, April 7:** Church council meets after the worship service
- **Thursday, April 18, 2023 (9:30 a.m.):** The church book club meets in Pastor Sue's office; they will discuss the novel *The River We Remember* by William Kent Krueger.

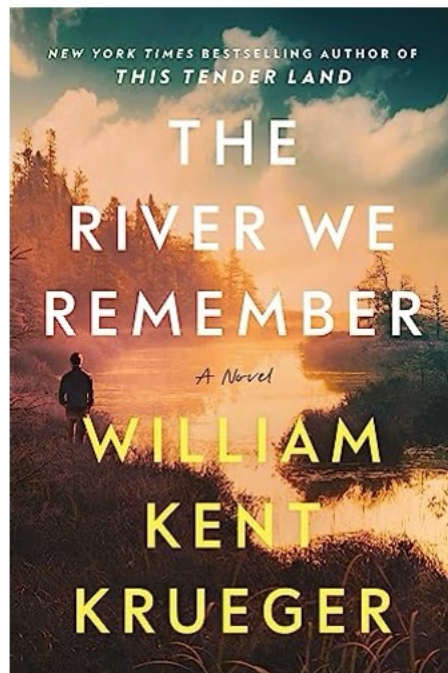
Amazon synopsis:

On Memorial Day in Jewel, Minnesota, the body of wealthy landowner Jimmy Quinn is found floating in the Alabaster River, dead from a shotgun blast. The investigation falls to Sheriff Brody Dern, a highly decorated war hero who still carries the physical and emotional scars from his military service. Even before Dern has the results of the autopsy, vicious rumors begin to circulate that the killer must be Noah Bluestone, a Native American WWII veteran who has recently returned to Jewel with a Japanese wife. As suspicions and accusations mount and the town teeters on the edge of more violence, Dern struggles not only to find the truth of Quinn's murder but also put to rest the demons from his own past.

Caught up in the torrent of anger that sweeps through Jewel are a war widow and her adolescent son, the intrepid publisher of the local newspaper, an aging deputy, and a crusading female lawyer, all of whom struggle with their own tragic histories and harbor secrets that Quinn's death threatens to expose.

Both a complex, spellbinding mystery and a masterful portrait of mid-century American life that is "a novel to cherish" (Star Tribune, Minneapolis), *The River We Remember* offers an unflinching look at the wounds left by the wars we fight abroad and at home, a moving exploration of the ways in which we seek to heal, and a testament to the enduring power of the stories we tell about the places we call home.

- **Friday, April 26:** Free Friday supper (5 - 6:30 p.m.) in Fellowship Hall.
- **Monday, April 29: (9:00 a.m.):** Men's breakfast at Brady J's.



Love divine,
in raising Christ to new life
you opened the path of salvation to all peoples.
Send us out, with the joy of Mary Magdalene,
to proclaim that we have seen the Lord,
so that all the world may celebrate with you
the banquet of your peace. Amen.

✦ Picture Us ✦

● **A Gift to the Church:** In October 2023, one of our former ministers, the Reverend Michael J. Garber, passed away. We were Reverend Garber's first church and he was our minister for 10 years (1966-1976). We recently received a gift from his estate. Among some older church records and bulletins was a painting of the church. Here it is as it's unwrapped for the congregation to see. What a beautiful gift; we will be sure to hang it in a prominent place for all to admire.



✦ 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.

✦ **Lectionary Readings for March & April** ✦

	FIRST READING	PSALM	SECOND READING	GOSPEL
March 3, 2024	Exodus 20:1-17	Psalm 19	1 Corinthians 1:18-25	John 2:13-22
March 10, 2024	Numbers 21:4-9	Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22	Ephesians 2:1-10	John 3:14-21
March 17, 2024	Jeremiah 31:31-34	Psalm 51:1-12 or <i>Psalm 119:9-16</i>	Hebrews 5:5-10	John 12:20-33
March 25, 2024	<u>Isaiah 7:10-14</u>	<u>Psalm 45</u> or <i>Psalm 40:5-10</i>	<u>Hebrews 10:4-10</u>	<u>Luke 1:26-38</u>
March 28, 2024 <i>Maundy 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
March 29, 2024 <i>Good Friday</i>	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
March 31, 2024 <i>Easter Day</i>	*Acts 10:34-43 or <i>Isaiah 25:6-9</i>	Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24	1 Corinthians 15:1-11 or <i>Acts 10:34-43</i>	John 20:1-18 or <i>Mark 16:1-8</i>
April 7, 2024	*Acts 4:32-35	Psalm 133	1 John 1:1-2:2	John 20:19-31
April 14, 2024	*Acts 3:12-19	Psalm 4	1 John 3:1-7	Luke 24:36b-48
April 21, 2024	*Acts 4:5-12	Psalm 23	1 John 3:16-24	John 10:11-18
April 28, 2024	*Acts 8:26-40	Psalm 22:25-31	1 John 4:7-21	John 15:1-8

Italicized readings, complementary to the standard reading, may be used with, or in place of it.

*** God, you sent your Son into the world that we might live through him. May we abide in his risen life so that we may bear the fruit of love for one another and know the fullness of joy. Amen. ***

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of East Bloomfield
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