

A Note From Paula

Today is Valentine's Day and it has been fun to watch the hundreds of people that are parading into Prescott's Florist to pick up flowers for their loved ones. Every year I hear the grumbling, primarily from men, wondering what is the purpose of this made up holiday? "It was created by the florists and the greeting card people." "Did you see how much cards cost?" Sound familiar?

Well, much like so many other things in our lives we need to be reminded sometimes to do things lest we forget. Set the alarm to get up, put appointments on the calendar, reminders on the computer that our meeting starts in 15 minutes; Valentines Day is a reminder for us to say the things we don't say enough to those we love.

And in the same way Lent is a time that reminds us to pause and to remember the love of Jesus. As Christians we have created our own rituals to help us learn, grow and remember. Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, Feb 22. There are several ways that you can join in this time of remembering and preparation. Choose the way that works best for you but just like Valentines Day you don't want to miss this opportunity. (See other announcements.)

Blessings
Paula

Lenten Justice Video Series We are partnering with The Taylor Community who will be our hosts. Taylor has a comfortable movie theater at Woodside that we will be using to watch and discuss three very different videos. Join us and bring a friend or two.

Invictus - Sunday, March 4, 6:30–9pm & Monday March 5 1–3:30pm

Nelson Mandela, in his first term as the South African President, initiates a unique venture to unite the apartheid-torn land: enlist the national rugby team on a mission to win the 1995 Rugby World Cup. This story tells of a country torn apart by hate and how they come together and begin to heal. Directed by Clint Eastwood with stars Morgan Freeman and Matt Damon – a must see!

For the Bible Tells Me So - Sunday March 11, 7-9pm & Monday March 12, 1-3pm

This video is an exploration of the intersection between religion and homosexuality in the U.S. In this movie we will meet five Christian families, each with a gay or lesbian child. Parents talk about their marriages and church-going, their children's childhood and coming out, their reactions, and changes over time. The stories told by these nine parents and four adult children alternate with talking heads including Protestant and Jewish theologians, conservative Christians and people on the street. They discuss scripture and biblical scholarship. This video explores what the scriptures say and don't say. The families in this video call for love. Directed by Daniel Karslake, starring Gene Robinson

The Visitor - Sunday March 18, 7-9pm & Monday March 19, 1-3pm

This story is about a lonely and widowed professor whose life has become lifeless and mundane and how he finds joy in a very unexpected place; two young immigrants, one a Syrian musician and the other a Senegalese street vendor. This movie is sure to initiate great conversation. Directed by Thomas McCarthy.

Lenten Booklet

Written by members of our church community, the Lenten booklet will be available as of Sunday, Feb. 19, just before Ash Wednesday. The booklet is prepared with love to support the congregation through the season of Lent. Deacons will distribute the booklet (one per household) after the church service on 2/19 and 2/26.

Please take note that a brief survey requesting feedback is inserted in the booklet. The Diaconate would appreciate hearing what you have to say. Please return the survey after you have had time to read the booklet. Surveys can be returned during church or to the church office.

Adult Sunday School and Marcus Borg!

Throughout Lent beginning on Feb 26 the Adult Sunday School class will be reading Embracing an Adult Faith: Marcus Borg on What It Means to be Christian (there isn't much reading). This is a video based series so anyone may attend at any time. The books are available for \$13 in the office or see Paula after church. Scholarships for the book are available if needed.

ATTENTION ALL SOUP MAKERS:

The Caring Connections Team would love your help in building a "frozen soup shelf" in our new freezer – so when a need arises in our congregation we can take a soup meal to them easily. Just label the freezer container with the kind of soup, the date and say for the Caring Connections. Put it in the freezer or leave it at Coffee Hour and it will be frozen for future use. A small size for two servings is fine.

Thank you,
Diane Wells, Coordinator
Caring Connections

The Lenten Vigil Journal is among the missing. The Diaconate is preparing for the Vigil and would like to have the Journal available for those participating. If you have borrowed the Journal, kindly return it to the church office.

**Friendly Kitchen at the
Salvation Army - every other month
on the second Friday**

Coordinators:

2012 May: Judy Nelson & Evelyn Millar
2012 July:
2012 Sept:
2012 November:
2013 March:

We need coordinators for next year are you willing to help coordinate a meal please call Dan Tinkham at 524-2901.



From the Deacons' Bench

As was suggested at the Annual Meeting, the Deacons discussed with staff the advisability of increasing the annual limit for assistance out of the Dorcas Fund. To meet the reality of increased costs for fuel, rent, gas, power, water, etc., the Deacons have raised the annual limit per family from \$300 to \$400. Our regular giving to the Dorcas Fund is essential for this ministry to our Laconia neighbors.

A Mission Moment:

...because we believe in God's continuing testament in the world, in extravagant welcome, in transforming lives!

One Great Hour of Sharing, the refugee, relief and development offering of the United Church of Christ, transforms lives through health, education, agricultural, and emergency relief initiatives in 138 countries.

Please give generously. (from UCC website)

One Great Hour of Sharing ... 3/18/2012

OGHS is Part of Five for Five ! (do you know what the Five are?) Keep watching for more information about FIVE FOR FIVE!

Winter Fun Day on Squam Lake

Sunday March 4th 1 – 4

Dick and Ruth Stuart have invited us to their home on Squam Lake. Bring your family, sled, snow shoes, cross county skis or just come and enjoy a warm bonfire and fellowship.

If you would like to bring a snack to share, we thank you. Drinks and s'mores will be provided.

Directions to the house are: from the lights in Meredith, take Rt. 25 east to Center Harbor. At the 2nd set of lights in Center Harbor, turn left onto Bean Road toward Center Sandwich. Go nearly 5 miles and you will see the lake on your left. Pass 2 large barns on the left and a red farmhouse on the right. We are the next house on the left, 677 Squam Lake Road (which is the same as Bean Rd.). Numbers change all along Bean Rd. so don't get worried about numbers until you have traveled the 5 miles. House is modern looking shingle house. Phone is 253-6709.

If you have questions, see me at church or you can call me at 524-7378 or email me, Tina Levasseur at tlevasseur@metrocast.net.

A BIG THANK YOU to all who helped bestow the surprise and honor of being the Church Service Award recipient this year. I didn't recognize myself for doing the things mentioned early on as Sue read the letter since I never thought of these as special jobs or special service chores. I love to be busy, to be part of fun things and to do things to help others. When I heard this person plays the cello, I woke up and realized it was me! Thank you again, for making it a special day for me and a memory I shall cherish always. Thank you all again. Diane Wells

New Members

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Congregational Church of Laconia, United Church of Christ you are invited to an informational gathering that will take place in the Youth Room of the Parish House on Sunday, March 11 at 10:45 a.m. We are hoping to receive a group of new members on Sunday, March 25. If you are unable to attend the gathering or would like more information please speak with Warren or Paula at your earliest convenience.

Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday begins the season of the Church year we know as Lent. On Wednesday, February 22nd at 7:00 PM you are invited to join together in our sanctuary for worship as we mark the beginning of this important time in the Christian calendar. The service will be quiet, gentle, and reflective and will culminate with the imposition ashes as a symbol of humility and penitence. Please plan to join us.

Lenten Book Study

GOSPELED Lives - Encounters with Jesus by John Indermark is a daily Lenten devotional – read a couple of pages each day about people who encountered Jesus and encounter Jesus yourself on this journey through Lent. Each Thursday at 5:30 to 7 p.m. we will gather for soup and discussion about the week's journey. All are invited to participate anytime – read the book alone and/or join the discussions. Books are available in the office for \$15 or see Paula after church. Scholarships for the book are available if needed.

Winter School Vacation will soon be upon us so don't put away your skis and skates just yet! For those in Preschool - 8th Grade there will be no Church School class on the first Sunday of the vacation week, Feb. 26. Classes will resume on Sunday, March 4. For babies and toddlers, the nursery (2nd floor of the Parish House) will be available on both Sundays Feb. 26 & March 4. Have a wonderful vacation everyone!

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 United Church of Christ
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Lunch and Learn

Feb. 29, 12-1pm Bring your lunch and a friend. We will share and enjoy homemade pumpkin soup from a locally grown pumpkin. Karen Barker, a local citizen and founder of *Back to Farming at Laconia State School*. Karen will share with us information about our own local food system, from production to distribution and everything in between. Learn more about our local farms and the importance of our local farms. Join us, come and fellowship and learn!

Tower Tidings Publication Schedule

Deadline @ 5 p.m.	Issue Date
2/27	3/4
3/12	3/18
3/26	4/1
4/16	4/22
4/30	5/6
5/14	5/20
5/28	6/3
6/11	6/17
6/25	7/1
7/23	7/29
8/27	9/2
9/10	9/16
9/24	9/30