

## Dates & Meetings

- Mar. 31 - 11:00 Be a Prayer Disciple
- Apr. 2 - 6:30 Membership Committee Mtg
- Apr. 3 - 6:30 Outreach Committee Mtg
- Apr. - 1:00 Communications Team Mtg
- Apr. 4 - 5:30 Lenten Soup/Study
- Apr. 7 - 11:00 How to Sit for Easter Vigil
- Apr. 7 - Noon Confirmation Class
- Apr. 9 - 7:00 Property & Finance Committee Mtg
- Apr. 10 - 6:30 Deacons Mtg
- Apr. 12 - Organ Recital
- Apr. 14 - Medical Planning
- Apr. 16 - 7:00 Worship & Music Mtg
- Apr. 17 Hands Across Table
- Apr. 18 - 5:00 Stewardship Mtg
- Apr. 18 - 5:30 Maundy Thursday Supper & Service
- Apr. 19 - 3:00 Easter Vigil
- Apr. 21 - 6:00 Easter Sunrise Service
- Apr. 24 - 6:30 Church Council Mtg
- Apr. 27 - 6:00 Spring Potluck
- Stitches of Love meets every Tuesday at 7 pm
- Choir practice is every Thursday 7 pm
- Bell Choir practices Sundays 10:45 am

# Tower Tidings



April 1, 2019

## Pastor's Letter

Friends,

Easter . . . bunnies and chocolate eggs, jelly beans, egg rolls and egg hunts; did you ever wonder where it all started? Or even the origin of the word "Easter"?

No one can say for sure but there are some theories around the etymology of the word Easter. For some it is the celebration of spring for others a day to remember deliverance and for many the celebration of new life in Christ. Some of the theories put forward for the origin of the word Easter I've discovered are as follows: It comes from the name of the pagan Anglo-Saxon goddess "Eostre." She was said to have been the goddess of the sunrise and spring. The direction of the sunrise, east, is named after her.

While the pagans celebrated rites of spring, the Jews celebrated Passover, the celebration of the Hebrew slaves being delivered out of Egyptian bondage. The Hebrew word is *Pe-sach*. If you recall the story YHWH demanded the firstborn male from every household but promised to pass over any house with the blood of a sacrificial lamb smeared on the doorpost. The dating of this celebration in the Jewish calendar corresponds with the beginning of spring.

Another theory is the word Easter comes from the Frankish church (Germanic people who settled in Rome during the 5<sup>th</sup> century). Their



celebration of the resurrection of Christ was called *alba* which means white, the color of the robes worn during the celebration. Later when the name of the festival was translated in the word *ostern*, meaning sunrise, was chosen perhaps in error. And that *ostern* is the origin of the word Easter.

From very early on the followers of Jesus of Nazareth began to understand Jesus crucifixion as carrying a deeper meaning of Passover. As Jesus was crucified during the time of Passover his death came to be seen as the ultimate sacrifice and he as the ultimate once and for all sacrificial lamb. And around this, over the centuries, the church has developed different views of "atonement" or just what and how Jesus' death accomplished God's love desire for the salvation of the world (see John 3:16.)



Easter . . . is it bunnies and chocolate, colored eggs and baskets lined with plastic grass, new spring dresses and outfits, hot cross buns and ham, (or lamb pie if you're Sicilian!) These are all good fun, especially for the

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kids and youthful among us!

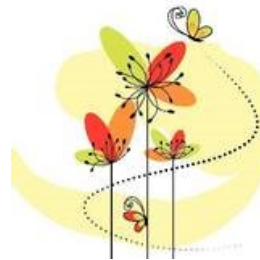
But for many Christians Easter is more significant than Christmas. It's Resurrection Day! The day the church celebrates Jesus' triumphal over the grave claiming victory over death.

*Christ  
is  
Risen!*

What is the resurrection? On one knows how it happened. No one was there to witness it. The witnesses only report an empty grave and powerful experiences of meeting the risen Christ. I believe this is how God intended it for in this way resur-

rection is not limited to a replication of what took place nearly two millennia ago. But resurrection can

take place anytime some one finds new life, a second or third opportunity at life. Isn't this also a deeper meaning behind spring? As the song in our hymnal goes,



*In the bulb there is a flower;  
in the seed, an apple tree;*

*In cocoons, a hidden promise:  
butterflies will soon be free!*

*In the cold and snow of winter  
there's a spring that waits to be,*

*Unrevealed until its season, something God  
alone can see.*

*Pastor Neil Wilson*

## Maine Mission Trip

**July 14-19 Sunday thru Friday or Saturday  
Maine Sea Coast Mission Down East Campus  
Cherryfield, Maine**



We have a great opportunity this summer to give back to a community in need! Rev. Neil has organized a wonderful mission trip for all of us to the

Maine seacoast this summer. We will be working on the housing rehabilitation project organized by the Maine Sea Coast Mission. The purpose of the project/mission is to provide home repairs and property weatherization for low income home owners so that their dwellings are safe, warm and dry in the Maine Seacoast area. This part of the coast of Maine is far beyond the tourist traps and usual recreational locations for which Maine is known.

We do need individuals who have construction experience but we also need many more who are there to help in various forms. One of the skills we will need is cooking as we will be responsible for providing our own meals.

Please consider joining us on the important mission. If you cannot make it, we **do** need help from others in the form of donations for some that are going. The cost for going is \$175pp. This covers basic accommodations, project coordination, etc. We hope you will give for some that cannot afford this cost but want to go and help.

Housing Rehabilitation Program ~  
[www.seacoastmission.org/what-we-do/  
housing-rehabilitation-program/](http://www.seacoastmission.org/what-we-do/housing-rehabilitation-program/)

or

Maine Sea Coast Mission ~  
[www.seacoastmission.org/](http://www.seacoastmission.org/)



## An invitation to Spiritual Practices from the Deacons

*Self examination, study, fasting, prayer and works of love are disciplines historically associated with Lent. We invite you to participate in several opportunities for spiritual practice in order to look inward and reflect on our readiness to follow Jesus.*

The Deacons have been keeping an Easter Vigil since 2006. The Deacons invite you to join us to sit for the vigil in the Chapel in the Sanctuary. Just what is a prayer vigil? The idea is many centuries old. Vigil indicates a time of vigilance, wakefulness, a watch, originally kept on the night before a religious feast with prayer or other devotions - Dr. Ralph F. Wilson, Rediscovering the Prayer Vigil. You can sign up for part of the vigil by taking an hour or two shift during the vigil. Or come sit for a few moments when the church is open between 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. The sign up sheets will be in the Pleasant Street Foyer. Any of the Deacons would be happy to answer your questions. Beth Shehadi can be reached at 528.6057.



**Be a Prayer Disciple**  
**Sunday, March 31**  
**11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.**  
**Bean Room**

Are you interested in becoming a Prayer Disciple? Come learn what we do and how you can become a disciple.

*Discussion leader: Rev. Paula Gile*



**Good Friday Easter Prayer Vigil**  
**Friday, April 19 through Sunday, April 21**  
**from 3:00 p.m. to Easter Sunrise 6:00 a.m.**

Join the Deacons for this prayer vigil in the Church Sanctuary.



**Good Friday Service**  
**Friday, April 19**  
**7:00 p.m.**  
**Sanbornton Congregational Church**

The service will feature the combined Congregational Church Choirs of Sanbornton and Laconia under the direction of Dennis Akerman. The organists will be Laura Belanger, Bob Bengtson and Mary Ruth Scott. The Pastors will be Ruth Martz, Neil Wilson, and Paula Gile.



**Easter Coffee Hour**  
**Sunday, April 21**  
**Church Hall**

Please help your Worship & Music Committee put out a celebratory spread for coffee hour on Easter Sunday. We hope to welcome a larger than usual congregation of members, family, and friends to worship the Living Savior that day and join us in fellowship afterwards. Your contributions of treats--sweet or savory, healthy or decadent--will ensure a coffee hour fit for the occasion. *Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!*



**How to Sit for the Easter Vigil**  
**Sunday, April 7**  
**11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.**  
**Small Chapel in Sanctuary**

Join us to learn more about how to sit for the Easter Vigil and what it is all about. To be held in the small chapel in the Sanctuary.

*Discussion leader: Rev. Neil Wilson*



**Maundy Thursday Supper & Service**  
**Thursday, April 18**  
**5:30 p.m.**  
**Church Hall**

Please join the Deacons for an intergenerational supper and service. Everyone is welcome

## Prayer, Prose and Potpourri



The New Hampshire Conference UCC Women's Fellowship (NHCUCC) has a special project in the works. We are compiling a booklet entitled *Prayer, Prose and Potpourri*. In 1984 and 1997 the First and Second Editions were printed offering prayers and words of encouragement and support to anyone who read it. Now we are working on the Third Edition for publication in September 2019. The booklet will consist of favorite prayers and sayings or inspirational readings you have found humorous or helpful during your lives.

Deadline for submissions is August 1. The booklet will be sold and proceeds will be used for scholarship money to aid women in attending Woman's Gatherings hosted by churches.

If you wish to submit to the booklet, do so by emailing the piece you wish to share to Margie Kreitler, Chair of the NH Women's Fellowship to [MVKreitler@gmail.com](mailto:MVKreitler@gmail.com). Please include your name, telephone number with your submission.

Questions? Call Margie at 279.6150.  
Thanks you and blessings to each of you.

Margie

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## 21st Century Church Update

*Submitted by LuAnn Mussari*

The times they are a-changin'. While our faith and mission are as constant as the love of God, churches need to be prepared to change with the times to remain healthy and vibrant places of worship and service. To that end, we have been participating in a NH Conference-led Leadership Development Class called Creating and Leading the 21st Century Church. Workshop topics to date have been Family Systems, Adaptive Leadership, and Communication. Before summer, we will also cover topics of Managing Conflict, Deep Vision, and Creativity & Innovation.

So, how does this impact YOU? Soon, we will be asking each and every one of you to honestly and prayerfully respond to an online survey which will take less than 30 minutes of your time. This Congregational Assessment Tool (CAT) is a standardized benchmarked questionnaire that we can customize with up to two supplemental modules of our own choosing and up to five questions specific to our church. Analysis of the CAT will bring a wealth of information that our pastors and leadership teams will use to move the Congregational Church of Laconia--UCC forward as a 21st Century Church.

Keep us in your prayers, and be ready to contribute your thoughts when the CAT is ready to be accessed!

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## Hands Across the Table

**March 31 and April 7** Pick up your 'Hand'

**April 16** Bring in your food item any time

**April 17 2:00 p.m.** Cooks needed for cooking in the church kitchen

**April 17 4:15 p.m.** Servers needed at St. Andre Bessette Parish House, Gilford Ave

Three times a year the Outreach Committee prepares and serves a hot meal at Hands Across the Table, a local non-profit that serves meals every Wednesday evening to anyone in the community who would like a meal and fellowship. We will be putting out brightly colored 'HANDS' with food items written on them for individuals to help donate the food and ready for pick up in church on March 31 and April 7. Food items will need to be brought to the church by April 16. Look for the signup sheet in the church narthex.





## Paula's Note

I know that the Lenten season is a season for reflection and preparation for the celebration of Easter. I know that it's a time for Christians to remember and reflect on Jesus' sacrifice and days in the desert. I know that the music during lent is a little darker and in minor keys – not light and joyful.

Yet, I'm not a person who focuses on darkness. So, for me Lent is the time of year that spring begins and spring is a special time in New England – feelings of lightness and joy seem to fill the air. And that feels really good. During Lent I also make a special commitment to spend more time each day in prayer, silence and devotions.

I give you a few of the ideas that I have been reflecting on this week:

God's Love Spreads Through Us  
From Galatians 6: 9-10:

*Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people.*

A quote from Eleanor Powell: What we are is God's gift to us. What we become is our gift to God.



### *Ripples of Love*

When a stone into the water is thrown,  
Its circle soon grows beyond its own,  
For a ripple can never stand alone.

Every ripple creates another,  
Just like when you touch your neighbor,  
You move them to reach out to others.

And you'll never, ever really know  
How far your ripples of love go  
All because, to God, you did not say "No."

## Confirmands Explore Other Faiths



During the confirmation process we explore other faith traditions and practices. In February we visited the Islamic Society of the Seacoast (ISSA) in Dover NH. Our hostess and teacher was Yussra - the adult daughter of the Imam. After the tragic shooting in the Mosques in New Zealand the confirmands were given the opportunity to sign a card of support and prayers to be sent to Yussra and ISSA. Paula also visited the Faith Formation youth and shared about the tragedy and offered them the opportunity to sign the card of hope and prayers for ISSA as well.

Below is a thank you note from Yussra and the ISSA - may we continue to pray for the light of God's love to continue to shine brightly in our world.

*Dear Paula and Church of Laconia Congregation,  
On behalf of the ISSA Masjid, I'd like to thank you so much for your kindness and generosity.*

*My eyes teared up as I read your letters, and the donation to our project was incredibly thoughtful.*

*Thank you so much for taking the time to talk to your community about the violence that hurts us all. We are blessed to live in a world where the light shines so much brighter than darkness ever could. Your support and caring for all communities is the antidote to that hatred. May we always stand united.*

*Always with love, Yussra!*



## Organ Recital

**Congregational Church of Laconia**  
**Friday April 12 at noon**  
**Susan Ferré, Organist**

*Submitted by Bob Bengtson* Susan Ferré has spent the last ten years directing a non-profit organization, Music in the Great North Woods, which sponsors, free of charge, classical concerts and organ scholarships in New Hampshire's North Country. She serves St. Barnabas Episcopal Church in Berlin, NH, as Organist and Director of Music, and has recently been elected Dean of the NH Chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

She has performed widely in Europe, Scandinavia, Brazil, Canada, and throughout the United States. She has served the faculties of Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, WA, Southern Methodist University, Perkins School of Theology, University of North Texas and the University of Paris at Vincennes. For more than twenty years Ferré directed the Texas Baroque Ensemble, an original instrument ensemble with 16 singers.

She holds degrees from Texas Christian University, the Eastman School of Music, University of North Texas, and was a Fulbright Scholar to Paris, where she received the Diplome d'Orgue et Improvisation from the Schola Cantorum in 1969. She has received honors for her contributions to early music from the University of North Texas and recently from Perkins School of Theology in Dallas. Her numerous recordings have received glowing critical reviews as well as a Gold GrIndie Award for creativity and accessibility. This concert is free to the public.

## Welcome Our New Members ~ Doug Teegarden & Connie Clark

**Doug Teegarden** ~ I moved to Laconia about 12 years ago with my girlfriend Cheryl Knight. I started a new job as a local truck driver for New England Motor Freight.

Cheryl and I live across the road from Ray and Kay Vercoe. Ray and Kay have been good friends and neighbors. October 1, 2012, I suffered two strokes from which Cheryl got me to the hospital, stayed by my side and literally saved my life. Four days in a Boston hospital, then five weeks at Health South Rehab. Such began my journey back to God and church. Seeking peace inside I accepted the Vercoe's invite to come here.

I was struck by the openness and friendly folks here. Not to mention how much the style of the church's sanctuary reminded me of the church I was raised in. It didn't take me long to realize I had found my new church home. I commit myself to serve you all and God to the best of my ability.



**Connie Clark** ~ She is originally from Abilene, Texas. After moving to Rochester, NH she became a member of the Congregational Church in 1998. Connie has been in Laconia for about five years, and was drawn to the Congregational Church here. She appreciates all the support Pastor Paula and Pastor Neil have given her, particularly during the difficult health issues and recent death of her husband, Chris. Connie is a hard worker, and has been employed at Vista Foods for about one year. She enjoys crocheting and joins the Stitches of Love group whenever she can.

## Spring Celebration Potluck and Sharing

**April 27 Saturday 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.**

**Church Hall**



The Membership Committee invites everyone to a Spring Celebration Potluck and Sharing, on Saturday, April 27, 6 - 9 PM. For those who wish, this will also be an opportunity to share and display your talents - painting, quilting, photography, an original poem, musical offering, collection - anything you would like to share. We should be in for some surprises! Further information and sign-up sheets will be available in the next few weeks at Sunday worship. For information, call Ruth Gill, Membership Chair 528-6608, or any committee member.

The Rummage Sale is right around the corner! We are desperately seeking donations of household items from your attic to basement and everything in between. Don't forget the tools, toys, jewelry, books, and linens! You may begin to drop off your donations off at church starting March 31. We also need your help to sort, sell and/or clean-up!



During the week of work, we feed our volunteers and on Thursday before we open at 5:00 p.m., we provide the volunteers with a hot meal. We gladly accept donations of snack foods and desserts as well as other items for our meal. We also sell dessert items on Friday during the sale.

If you are unable to help during the week, you could help with food or desserts. Sign up sheets are available during Coffee Hour after church Sunday. Contact Hollis Thompson ~ 512.970.6592 or Connie

This Sunday, March 31, UCC offering for One are special envelopes in This is one of the 5 spe- Great Hour of Sharing is of the UCC that carries



we are receiving the a special Great Hour of Sharing. There the pews and in the bulletins. cial offerings in the UCC. One the special mission offering God's message of love and

hope to people in significant need or crisis. Through One Great Hour of Sharing, lives are literally changed daily. Imagine the ripples of change we can make happen by sharing our gift with the world. Please give generously.



Congregational  
Church of Laconia,  
UCC  
18 Veterans Square  
Laconia NH 03246

Church office hours  
Monday thru Friday  
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Senior Pastor:  
Rev. Neil Wilson  
neil@laconiaucc.org

Associate Pastor:  
Rev. Paula B. Gile  
paula@laconiaucc.org

Editor-in-Chief:  
Camille Gibson  
churchoffice@laconiaucc.org

## Sharing a Legacy Planning Seminars Continues

**Medical Planning**  
**Sunday, April 14**  
**11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**  
**Church Library**

### Medical Planning Has been cancelled

**What I Want My Church to Know**  
**Sunday, May 19**  
**11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**  
**Church Library**

*Submitted by Martha Kruse* The final seminar is "What I Want My Church to

Know". Or "What I would like my pastor to say about me after I'm gone!" This session will be an in-house gathering led by Pastor Neil. This gathering is an opportunity to consider what you want your family and church to know when it comes time to plan your funeral or memorial service. Your wishes might include, but are not limited to hymns, scripture readings, poetry, etc.

Attendees will be offered the opportunity to complete a form that describes these wishes. Forms will be also available for all church members after the seminar. A copy of the form stating your preferences can be kept at the church office if you so choose.



NHCUCC Women's Spring Gathering  
and Annual Meeting  
Saturday, May 11, 2019  
9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
*Everyday Brings New Choices*  
First Congregational Church  
5089 Union Street, Manchester, NH

You are invited to check out our new website

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

The monthly calendar is still under construction