

From the Pastor's Desk...



Greetings!

I hope this season of Lent is proving to be meaningful for you. As we worshipped together and then lingered at the tables in Fellowship Hall after our soup lunch together (good job on the soups, everyone), it felt like Communion to me. I love the relationships that are fostered in our congregation. We take good care of each other.

The words of Septima Poinsette Clark that I quoted in my sermon Sunday also linger: "The greatest evil in our country today is not racism, but ignorance. I believe unconditionally in the ability of people to respond when they are told the truth. We need to be taught to study rather than to believe, to inquire rather than to affirm."

As I said Sunday, it's that last sentence that pulls me: to be taught to study rather than to believe, to inquire rather than to affirm." The key to life and faith is not found in grasping at certainties, but in asking good questions of and with one another and growing together.

This coming Sunday we will celebrate Communion together as we begin a new month. Before the next newsletter comes out, we will have remembered Jesus' death and resurrection. Let us continue the journey together.

Peace,
Milton

MARCH WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Please join every Sunday at 10am in the Church for service, followed by coffee hour in the Parlor! Note: These are lectionary passages for your own devotional purposes. Weekly scripture readings are subject to change.

<u>March 3rd, 2024</u> Holy Communion <i>Third Sunday of Lent</i> Scripture: Exodus 20: 1-17 Psalm 19 1 Corinthians 1: 18-25 John 2: 13-22	<u>March 10th, 2024</u> <i>Fourth Sunday of Lent</i> Scripture: Numbers 21: 4-9 Psalm 107: 1-3, 17-22 Ephesians 2: 1-10 John 3: 14-21
<u>March 17th, 2024</u> <i>Fifth Sunday of Lent</i> Scripture: Jeremiah 31: 31-34 Psalm 51: 1-12 Hebrews 5: 5-10 John 12: 20-33	<u>March 24th, 2024: Palm/Passion Sunday</u> <i>Sixth Sunday of Lent</i> Scripture: Isaiah 50: 4-9a Psalm 31: 9-16 Philippians 2: 5-11 Mark 14: 1-15, 47
<u>March 28th, 2024: Maundy Thursday</u> Service Starts at 7:30pm* Scripture: A Service of Tenebrae <i>*Details to follow, stay tuned to email for updates</i>	<u>March 31st, 2024</u> Easter Sunday Scripture: Acts 10: 34-43 Psalm 118: 1-2, 14-24 1 Corinthians 15: 1-11 John 20: 1-18



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Happy Birthday Wishes Go to the Following:

Amos Hewitt	March 4 th
Lynda Pedersen	March 4 th

If you would like to add your name to our birthday list, please contact our office.

Annual Meeting: Committee Reports Needed!

The 259th Annual Meeting of the Mount Carmel Congregational Church will be held on Sunday, April 28th, 2024, following our regularly scheduled worship service. If you are the head of a committee, we ask that you send a typed copy of your report to Aren, preferably by email, by Thursday, March 28th in order for it to be included in the Annual Report for 2023. Please also include a list of your current members and officers for record-keeping purposes, as well as a list of any positions that need to be filled so that we can include them in the nominations for the year.

Sincerely,
Beverly Jurkiewicz
Church Clerk

Faith Formation

Lenten Season. We will be well into the Lenten season during March as Ash Wednesday was February 14th this year. That is the beginning of Lent. Easter will be Sunday, March 31st. The Lenten Season is 40 days long, not counting Sundays. It began as a time to prepare new converts for Baptism at Easter. During that time, they learned the creed and the Lord's Prayer. They also fasted. It had become a 40-day preparation period by the middle of the fourth century. Christians today still use this time for self-discipline, fasting, reflection, & re-affirmation of their baptismal vows. Purple is the color of the season until Palm Sunday which is red. Also, we stop singing "Alleluias" during this time. Included in this newsletter is a page of Lenten symbols on **page 7**.

ARK Banks. We will continue to collect money for the Pastor's Discretionary fund. Please bring in your filled ark, place it in the offering plate or drop it off in the office. Empty banks are available in the narthex or at the parish hall entry. Thank you.

-Debbie Wooley

Outreach

OGHS. One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is our next special offering. Monies received for this offering are sent to international places lacking health and educational resources and/or where disaster has struck. We will collect the offering on Sunday, March 10th. Please note OGHS in the memo line on your check and place it in the offering plate. Thank you.

-Debbie Wooley

Trustee Renovations

If you have attended Coffee Hour in recent weeks, you will have likely noticed the new windows and shades in our newly painted Parlor. This is the result of the Board of Trustees and their continuous efforts to renovate and maintain our Church. If you have any questions, please contact Anna Anderson!

-Board of Trustees

Stewardship

As of March 1st, pledges to date are \$87,000 with 42 individual pledge units. You can see a more detailed view of our progress on **page 6** of this newsletter! If you have any additional questions regarding stewardship and pledging, please contact me by email at ce@mccucc.com.

“Giving is more than a responsibility-it is a privilege; more than an act of obedience-it is evidence of our faith.” – William Arthur Ward

-Debbie Wooley

“Souper Bowl Sunday” Potluck Luncheon

Our “Souper Bowl Sunday” Potluck Luncheon was a huge success! We had 11 soups this year, which is the most that we have had since starting this event. We would like to thank all those who contributed, whether that be with set-up and clean-up, providing some fantastic soup recipes, or by donating a can of soup for the Hamden Food Bank.

We would also like to give a **big shout out** to Bill for managing our electrical outlets so that we could fit more crockpots on the grid without shorting it. Stay tuned for our next Potluck Luncheon, which will be in the Spring!

-Church Staff

Spring Tag and Craft Sale

Our next tag/craft sale is scheduled for April 27th from 9am-2pm. Table spaces are \$20 each. Please call Vera DeAngelo at (203) 239-7135 to make a reservation. As per usual, we will be selling delicious Cabot cheese and will be holding a bake sale. There will also be a variety of church craft and tag tables. We hope to see you there!

-Church Staff

Tai Chi

If you are looking for a low impact exercise class, then tai chi may be for you. No equipment is required and it is done standing up. Tai chi is very good for balance, can lower blood pressure, and relieve stress, among other things. Stop by the parish hall Tuesdays, 9:30 am to play tai chi with me. Cost is \$10 per person each session. Contact Debbie Wooley if you have any questions. jhwooley@snet.net

-Debbie Wooley

Bell Tree Submissions

Do you have an event to announce? A story to share? We would love to hear it! Send us an email at office@mccucc.com by the second to last Tuesday of the month and we may include your article in our next publication!

-Aren Alberico

FINANCIAL REPORT: DECEMBER 2023

Following is the financial report for December 2023. If you have any questions, Ellen can be reached at treasurer@mccucc.com.

Income:	Pledges and Offerings:	\$16,317.00
	Other Income:	\$2,033.00
	Total Income:	\$18,350.00
Expenses:	Total Expenses:	\$20,904.00
Net Income (Loss):		-\$2,554.00

FINANCIAL REPORT: JANUARY 2024

Following is the financial report for January 2024. Just a note for clarification: we were able to cover the expenses without drawing down our investments because we had carry-over monies from 2023, which was reported in the 2023 numbers. If you have any questions, Ellen can be reached at treasurer@mccucc.com.

Income:	Pledges and Offerings:	\$7,152.00
	Other Income:	\$1,773.00
	Total Income:	\$8,925.00
Expenses:	Total Expenses:	\$20,525.00
Net Income (Loss):		-\$11,600.00

GENERAL ANNOUCEMENTS

Ushers. We are always looking for more Ushers – no experience necessary! Please see Dave or Bev Jurkiewicz, or Debbie Wooley, for more information!

Joys and Concerns. If you wish to have a joy or concern announced during worship, please forward to them to Aren at office@mccucc.com or call the church office at (203) 248-7408.

Pastoral Support. If you require pastoral support or guidance, feel free to contact our minister, Reverend Milton, by email at Pastor@mccucc.com, or by calling our office.

Coffee Hour. Coffee Hour volunteers are needed. If you would like to sign up for a Sunday, please contact the office directly or use the signup sheet now located at the entrance of the Parish House.

Altar Flowers. Altar flowers are needed. If you would like to sign up for a Sunday, please contact the office directly or use the signup sheet now located at the entrance of the Parish House.

Rentals. If you or anyone you know would be interested in renting out our parish hall to host a small private event, please feel free to visit our website for scheduling, rates, and conditions.

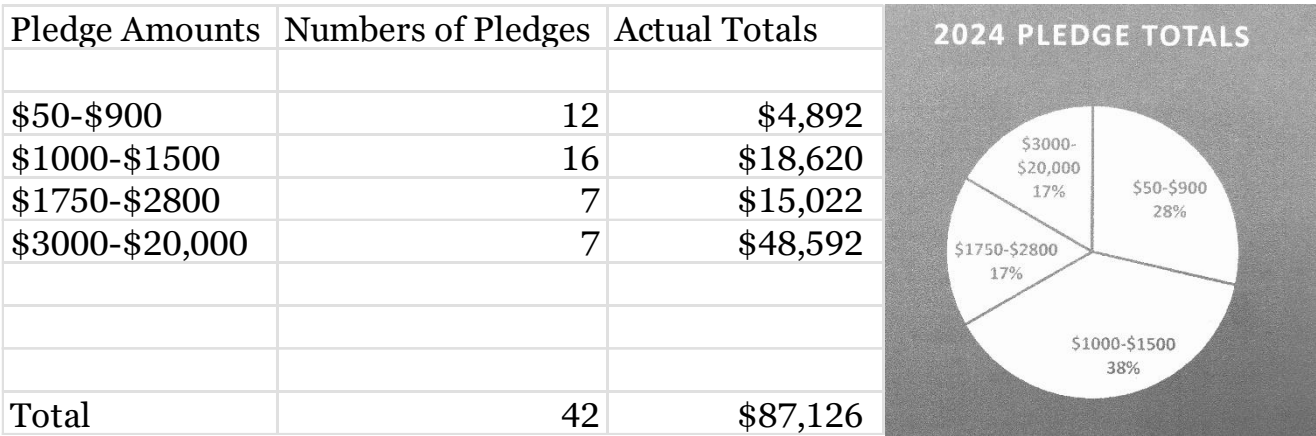
Food Bank. Donations for the Food Bank are always needed if you are able to contribute. Non-perishable items such as canned beef stew, hearty soups, canned fish, peanut butter, mac and cheese packages, and oatmeal would be greatly appreciated.

Prayer Shawls. As a reminder, Prayer Shawls are always available to those who need them. If you or anyone you know needs one, please contact the office and we will arrange a shawl for you.

Lost & Found. As of the time of writing, we have a number of items in our Lost & Found: 1) A pair of unbranded leopard-print glasses left from the Shirts and Skirts Christmas Party; 2) A pair of Foster Grant leopard-print glasses; and 3) A straw hat. If any of these items belong to you, then please contact the Church Office at your earliest convenience.

Directory. Copies of the 2024 Directory are available in the Office. If you would like a digital copy of our Directory, please fill out the following Google Form (<https://mccucc.tiny.us/directory>) and we will send you a copy as soon as possible. If you would like a physical copy, please contact the office and we will set a copy aside for you.

2024 Stewardship Pledges: Infographics



Lenten Symbols

Symbols are an important ingredient during our Lenten preparation for Easter. They remind us of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem and what happened there. Most of the Lenten symbols below are taken directly from the events of the last week of Jesus' life.

Palms

Branches of the palm tree, regarded as sacred from early Semitic times, were waved triumphantly as Jesus entered Jerusalem.



The Number 40

The 40 days of Lent are symbolic of Jesus' 40 days of temptation in the wilderness after his baptism and before the beginning of his ministry.

Forty is a number used repeatedly in the Bible, signifying "a period of transformation."



Ashes

A symbol of our mortality and an ancient sign of sorrow and repentance for sin. On



Ash Wednesday, ashes are placed on the foreheads of worshipers in the sign of a cross. Traditionally these are the ashes from the burning of the previous year's Palm Sunday branches or crosses.

Loaf and Cup

Jesus shared bread and wine with his disciples during the Last Supper. (Luke 22:19-20)



Basin and Towel

At the last supper, Jesus washed the feet of his disciples and commanded them to love and serve one another. (John 13:5)



Bag of Coins



Just before the last supper, Judas met with the chief priests and temple guard and agreed to betray Jesus to them for 30 pieces of silver. (Matt. 26:15)

Lantern

On the night of the betrayal and arrest of Jesus, Judas and a group of Roman soldiers and temple guards entered the garden of Gethsemane with lanterns and torches. (John 18:3)



Rooster



Jesus told Peter that before the rooster crowed, Peter would deny 3 times that he knew Jesus. (Luke 22:34)

Rope

A rope was used to bind Jesus when he was led away to the High Priest. (John 18:12)



Pillar and Scourges

The scourges and pillar are representative of the trial and condemnation of Jesus. The type of pillar shown is traditional, as it was supposed that this was the type to which Jesus was tied when the soldiers stripped and flogged him. (John 19:1)



Crown of Thorns

The soldiers mockingly placed a crown of thorns on Jesus' head. (John 19:2)



Robe and Dice



The soldiers gambled to see which one would have Jesus' woven seamless robe. (John 19:23-24)

Nails

Jesus was nailed to the cross. (John 20:25)



I.N.R.I.

These are the first letters of the Latin inscription which Pilate put on the cross of Jesus – *Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum* – Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews. (Matt. 27:37)



Eastern Cross

The upper horizontal arm represents the place of the inscription over the head of the crucified Jesus. The lower slanting arm represents his footrest.



Passion Cross

This cross is distinguished by its pointed ends. It is also known as the cross of suffering. Symbolically it indicates Maundy Thursday or Good Friday (as contrasted to the empty plain cross – a symbol of resurrection).



Chi Rho

These 2 joined letters represent the first 2 letters in the Greek word "Christos" or "Christ" (God's anointed one). This is what we confess in our celebration of Easter – that we believe Jesus is the Christ, God's anointed one.





The Altar Guild

Orders for Memorial Easter Plants, 2024

Place Orders At:

Sunday Coffee Hours, March 10th & March 17th.
or call Karen Amato at (203) 651-9769 by Wednesday, March 20th.

Choice of: Tulips, Daffodils, or Hyacinths Cost: \$8.00 each
Easter Lilies: Cost: \$10.00 each

Plants will be displayed on Easter Sunday and can be taken after worship Service.

Please fill out the form below and return to the office or Karen Amato.

EASTER PLANTS ORDER FORM

Ordered By _____ Phone _____

In Memory of: _____

Or, (other dedication) _____

Tulips _____
Daffodils _____
Hyacinths _____
Easter Lilies _____

Flowers total cost \$ _____

Check one:

Will take after service _____

Will leave at church _____

A Crowd of People Welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem



"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"
 "Hosanna in the highest!"

Matthew 21:9



Jesus' Sad Walk to a Garden

After Jesus celebrated the Passover with His apostles, He shared the Last Supper with them. Then they sang a hymn and went out to the Garden of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives. It was a sad walk for Jesus. He is God, and He knew what would happen in the garden that night. To learn more about this story, write the missing letter from each set of letters on the line.

- | | | |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1. QRTUVWX _____ | 3. ABDEFGH _____ | 4. ABCEFGH _____ |
| EFGHJKL _____ | WXYZBCD _____ | YZABCDF _____ |
| LMOPQRS _____ | LMNOQRS _____ | PQRTUVW _____ |
| PQRTUVW _____ | PQRSUVW _____ | ABCEFGH _____ |
| 2. XYZACDE _____ | STVWXYZ _____ | NOPQRSTU _____ |
| BCDEFGHI _____ | NOPQRSTU _____ | SUVWXYZ _____ |
| QRSUVWX _____ | BCDEFGHI _____ | |
| NOPQRSTU _____ | | |
| XYZBCDE _____ | | |
| TUVWXZA _____ | | |

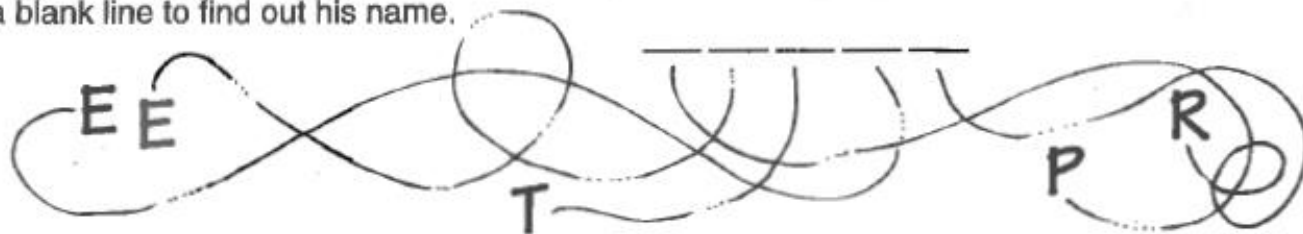


Use the words you wrote above in the sentences below.

Jesus was sad because He knew that . . .

1. He would soon bear our _____ in His body on the cross.
2. One of His apostles, Judas, would _____ Him to His enemies.
3. These enemies would come and _____ Him.
4. All of His other apostles would _____ Him.

Later that night, another apostle denied three times that he knew Jesus. Trace each letter to a blank line to find out his name.



Are you ashamed to tell your schoolmates and friends about Jesus? Isn't that the same as denying Him? Speak up for Jesus! Share His love!

Jesus Is Risen

1



Why did the Jews say Jesus must die (John 19:4-7)?

1. He was from Nazareth.
2. He was a king.
3. He claimed to be the Son of God.

2



The numbers below stand for letters of the alphabet. Which message tells what the notice Pilate wrote about Jesus said (John 19:16-19)?

4. 10,5,19,21,19 15,6 14,1,26,1,18,5,20,8 11,9,14,7
15,6 20,8,5 18,15,13,1,14,19
5. 10,5,19,21,19 15,6 14,1,26,1,18,5,20,8 11,9,14,7
15,6 20,8,5 10,5,23,19
6. 10,5,19,21,19 15,6 7,1,12,9,12,5,5, 11,9,14,7
15,6 20,8,5 10,5,23,19

3



Which picture shows how Jesus was given a drink while He was on the cross (John 19:28-30)?

1. 
2. 
3. 



Write the answer number to puzzle

#1 _____ #2 _____ #3 _____

Change the numbers into these groups of letters.

- | | | |
|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1 = hewillc | 3 = heisnot | 5 = hereheha |
| 2 = srisen | 4 = ntothe | 6 = goseewh |

What did the angel say to the women at the tomb (Luke 24:1-7)?



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Faith Formation:	Mrs. Debbie Wooley ce@mccucc.com
Treasurer:	Mrs. Ellen Amato treasurer@mccucc.com
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